

LAST LETTERS OF AUBREY BEARDSLEY

LAST LETTERS
OF
AUBREY BEARDSLEY

WITH AN INTRODUCTORY NOTE,

BY

THE REV. JOHN GRAY

LONGMANS, GREEN,
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INTRODUCTION.

AUBREY BEARDSLEY, about whom much has been written since his death in the month of March, 1898, now speaks for himself. His work, and the appreciations of many of his literary and artist friends, present together a fairly complete picture of the man whose engaging figure was so familiar in London during a very few years. Of the work there remains probably nothing to be said. It is certain that his imaginative gifts never showed a sign of fatigue or exhaustion, and it is equally certain that artistically and intellectually he was very far from his maturity when death came. What that maturity would have produced is a speculation as idle as must be barren any attempts to determine the sources of his originality. He was utterly devoid of any malevolence towards his fellow-creatures, whether individually or collectively. He had in his nature a great possibility of affection, if personal timidity or sensitiveness baulked its expression. Not even the sternest of his critics will deny his sincerity or his sobriety, but such an outspoken man as

he was with incorrigible youthfulness of spirit will sometimes shock the anxious, and arouse the suspicion that he is perpetrating a malicious mystification ; but it is truer to say that Beardsley's chief preoccupation was to communicate in his drawings the surprise and delight which the visible world afforded himself.

In the midst of a brilliant career came the shock of a first haemorrhage of the lungs, and the cloud began to gather which meant death in the end. None of his personal friends, I think, doubted of the lamentable issue from the first ; but all agreed to practise, as friends do, the complacent hypocrisy of buoying up the dejected spirit of the young man. The many delicately effaced themselves, and his intercourse with the world outside his family narrowed rapidly.

The letters now published become consecutive with this crisis of Beardsley's doomed life. Hitherto, where they are not merely formal, they are jejune and fitful, with some presage perhaps of the approaching collapse of health. What person with any experience of mental sickness in men and women will not look a priori for a modification of character in this rare soul under the scourge of disease ? The common case which bears a phenomenal aspect is that of a person by nature selfish who becomes considerate of others when the prop of life is struck at. Those whose lives happen to be passed

INTRODUCTION

among the rougher sort see this pseudo-miracle in its strong contrasts. If one lives upon the very bedrock of primal human conditions, among rudimentary actions and passions, one finds the accretions of life to be either consonant with nobility, purity, self-sacrifice, or sordid and repulsive beyond description. Six months of sinking hope in life sometimes brings the two extremes into line. Sickness seems to do what nothing else could. What appears to the observer is the gradual humiliation of the physical economy being accompanied by the proportionate emancipation of the spiritual. It is a spectacle so moving, the reduction of a coarse brute to a frank-eyed youth, the renascence of a gentle-souled factory-girl, supposed to have been long ago drowned in drink and gone for ever, from the wreck of a wild virago, that in presence of it the words tuberculosis, cancer, and even the euphemistic G. P., cease to curdle the blood.

Where the amenities of life are full and rich and varied, where a delicate and cultivated soul gives no outward indication that it is not tuned up to the pitch of which it is capable, the operation of the same principle may be deeply obscured, but one cannot suppose it to be entirely absent. Aubrey Beardsley might, had he lived, have risen, whether through his art or otherwise, spiritually, to a height from which he could command the horizon he was created to scan. As it was, the long

INTRODUCTION

anguish, the increasing bodily helplessness, the extreme necessity in which some one else raises one's hand, turns one's head, showed the slowly dying man things he had not seen before. He came face to face with the old riddle of life and death; the accustomed supports and resources of his being were removed; his soul, thus denuded, discovered needs unstable desires had hitherto obscured; he submitted, like Watteau his master, to the Catholic Church.

The manifest importance of this addition to the multitude of similar writings is half the editors' explanation of their action in giving this living piece of autobiography to the world; and the simplicity and dignity of the writer completes it. As a contribution to the body of scientific documents it is of the first order, for it is the diary of a keen intelligence concentrated upon its utterances, without *arrière pensée*. Nor have the impressions here recorded been sifted in the subject's brain, to their detriment, as is necessarily the case when a man deliberately writes his biography. Everything is clear and crisp from the intellect which could not see things otherwise. In the preparation of them for publication, the letters have been treated with the greatest reverence. In many, passages have been suppressed, but such omissions have been made with one aim, to avoid giving pain or displeasure to living people. For similar reasons, arbitrary signs have been

substituted, in most cases, for proper names. Otherwise, the text is that of the originals, faults of orthography and slips of the pen standing uncorrected. Great pains have been taken to arrive at an exact chronological arrangement, rendered difficult by the "Wednesday" system of dating, and the loss of the envelopes in most cases. The letters form an integral series, received by one person; a few, however, addressed to another man, have been included, for the sake of whatever light they throw upon the rest. These are distinguished by their numbers being inclosed in heavy brackets. A few explanatory footnotes have been added.

JOHN GRAY,
*Priest of the Archdiocese of St. Andrews
and Edinburgh.*

November, 1904.

INDEX.

Adolphe, 35, 36, 38.
Balzac, 65.
Behn, Mrs. Aphra, 13.
Bernhardt, Mme. Sarah, 4, 48, 50.
Beussod Valadon, 67.
Browning, 7.
Burrard, Capt., 68.
Cazotte, 60.
Cecilia, 27, 34.
Crashaw, 1.
Das Rheingold, 20.
Davray, M., 90, 105.
Dick, C. Cotsford, 19.
Diderot, 24.
Dolmetsch, Arnold, 12.
Donnay, Maurice, 29.
Doxat, Frau Ida, 9.
Dowson, Ernest, 34.
Eida Sabola, 22.
Ellis, Havelock, 21.
Erewhon, 25.
Esther Waters, 19.
Evan Harrington, 105.
Evelina, 27, 34.
Fénelon, 35.
Féré, Charles, 23.
Gaston de Latour, 24.
Goethe, 6.
Goodyear, 18.
Habicht, Ludwig, 145.
Hailand, Henry, 68.
Hawtrey, Miss, 54.
Heine, 55.
Hello, Ernest, 92.
Huysmans, 85, 153.
John Johns, 127.
Laclos, Choderlos de, 35, 36.
La Nuit de l'Holouse, 20.
Les Liaisons dangereuses, 41.
Lumenjou, 7.
Lorraine, Claude, 25, 27.
Louÿs, Pierre, 33.
Lysistrata, 16, 29.
Marty, Edward, 28.
M'Daniel, F., 16.
Mendès, Catulle, 29.
Meredith, George, 3, 105.
Moore, George, 19.
Musset, A. de, 42.
Napoleon, 23, 24, 32.
Nietzsche, Friedrich, 22.
O'Sullivan, Vincent, 136.
Pan, 4.
Parker, Gilbert, 23.
Pascal, 55.
Père Goriot, 65.
Père Ollivier, 84.
Proudhon, 20, 36.

Rachilde, 23, 41, 53, 87, 88.
R' stir de la Bretonne, 32.
 Ribadaneira, 87.
 Rothenstein, W., 110.
 St. John, Miss Florence, 20.
 Sainte-Berthe, 47.
 Sainte-Theresa, 84.
Salome, 1.
 Sand, Georges, 26, 61, 62.
Sidonia the Sorceress, 29.
Tannhäuser, 4, 23.
The Babe, 71.
The Island of Dr. Moreau, 24, 26.

The Memoirs of Casanova, 136.
The Pilgrim's Progress, 41.
The Thousand and One Nights, 91.
 Thompson, Dr. Symes, 14, 79.
 Toulouse, Ed., 50.
 Uzanne, Octave, 91, 97.
 Voltaire, 28.
Volupté, 47.
 Watteau, 6, 44, 45.
 Winckelmann, 6.
 Zola, 29, 30, 31, 42.

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LONDON, NEW YORK, AND BOMBAY

LONGMANS, GREEN, & CO

I.

(May, 1895.)

114 Cambridge Street,
S.W.

MY DEAR, MENTOR

I shall be enchanted to assist at the performance of Mefistofele on Thursday. I have never heard it.

As to the passage you send me I don't think it could possibly do me any harm; besides I in no way regret my pictures to Salome. Crashaw is perfectly delicious. I shall be with you to-morrow.

Yours

AUBREY BEARDSLEY.

II.

(May, 1895.)

114 Cambridge Street,
S.W.

DEAR MENTOR

The little sticks¹ are quite "adorable". I never wear an overcoat after the first of May.

¹ Walking sticks.

LAST LETTERS OF

Your study of —— is I think quite brilliant. Thanks so much for giving me a copy. Till this evening

Yours

AUBREY BEARDSLEY.

I enjoyed Mefistofele enormously.

III.

(May, 1895.)

114 Cambridge Street,
Warwick Sq., S.W.

MY DEAR MENTOR

Very many thanks for your book of verses which I am just dipping into.

I have been writing most of the day & found the chocolate a great support in my quest of epithets. On Friday I shall be most pleased to lunch with you.

Thank you for the note.

Yours

TELEMAQUE.

IV.

(13th May, 1895.)

114 Cambridge Street,
S.W.

MY DEAR MENTOR

I have noted your charming invitations upon my tablets.

Last night was a perfect success. I can't tell you how much I enjoyed myself.

Yours

TÉLÉMAQUE.

V.

(May, 1895.)

114 Cambridge St.

MY DEAR MENTOR

First for your sonnet a thousand thanks. You shall have one in return when my thoughts can find "a shape in which to wander forth," meantime your verses lie amongst my treasures. How charming of you to send me these letters of **Meredith**, they are full of his splendid manner. Of course I shall value them enormously,—but I feel I am robbing you.

I am delighted with the idea of making your portrait; it must be in pastel on brown paper—full length. I shan't plague you with long sittings as I draw very quickly.

Monday evening I am free & will be very pleased to spend it with you.

Yours till Saturday morning

TÉLÉMAQUE.

I am beginning the frontispiece,—a literal rendering of the first line—.

VI.

(May, 1895.)

114 Cambridge Street,
London, S.W.

Tuesday.

MY DEAR MENTOR

The frontispiece is quite finished & looks pretty.

Sarah's first night was a huge success. I have never seen such a reception as she got. She played superbly. What a pity though she did not start with Fedora. It would have been such a splendid reply to —— —— who really turns out to be the most incompetent creature. How I should love to come to Berlin, but I'm afraid it will be impossible with all the work I have to get through. By the way, some lovely flowers came to me yesterday from Goodyear's—thanks so much. I saw the prospectus for "Pan" when I was in Paris, of course it interested me enormously; it would be quite delightful to do anything for it.

Your advice as to work, food and sleep is not wasted on me. I have plenty of each. I suppose the result of the —— trial is in the German papers—two years' hard. I imagine it will kill him.

On Friday I am going to hear Tannhäuser. I look forward to it with mixed pleasure for it puts me most terribly out of conceit with my own little variations on the same theme.

Best remembrances to Y.Z.

Yours

TÉLÉMAQUE.

VII.

(May, 1895.)

114 Cambridge St.
Saturday.

MY DEAR MENTOR

It was so charming of you to like the frontispiece. I am going to X. with it the first thing next week & will try to explain to him how the book is to be made up.

London is adorably bright and busy to-day. I don't quite know what's happening but St. James's Palace parapets are lined with pretty frocks.

Looking forward to a letter from you—& the columbine

Yours

TÉLÉMAQUE.

VIII.

TELEGRAM, 5TH JUNE, 1895.

received your letter should so much like to come and will if I possibly can Berlin must be splendid some columbines have just come and are quite adorable Telemaque.

IX.

TELEGRAM, 8TH JUNE, 1895.

thanks for sonnets quite delightful perhaps you had better not take rooms till I wire again have many business engagements Telemaque.

LAST LETTERS OF

X.

(June, 1895.)

114 Cambridge St.

DEAR MENTOR

A deadlock. X. refuses to print my frontispiece because it contains a nude Amor. What's to be done?

Yours

TÉLÉMAQUE.

XI.

(June, 1895.)

 114 Cambridge St.,
 Warwick Sq., Londor.
 Sunday.

MY DEAR MENTOR

I am most distressed at X.'s behaviour. Have you really withdrawn the book? Surely it would have been better simply to have dropped the frontispiece & let me make another. It was delightful of you to think of me in Goethe's rose garden. What a great treat it must have been to have seen his collection of treasures; the drawings especially must have been interesting. I am almost surprised when you tell me, that there is a Watteau amongst them. The cult for him is so entirely modern; & when Goethe probably acquired the drawing Watteau's reputation had been smothered everywhere — except in England — & the new classical school in Germany — Winckleman & all the rest, must have had him in abhorrence.

It will be impossible for me to join you !

Our house is on the eve of sale & I can't leave my sister single handed. The new tenant can take possession almost at once so a grand move will be imminent.

Goodyear has sent me the most delicious flowers. Thank you ^{so} much. At the opera on Friday Tannhäuser was suddenly changed for Lohengrin which never touches me outside the concert room. The most impossible parts of the "ring" are more suitable for the operatic stage, I don't believe the tenor lives who could play Lohengrin. Albani was the Elsa. I shall be enormously interested to see those ten new pages of your Procés —. I hear — has been put into the infirmary. So glad the weather is behaving itself during your tour. Cassel must have been adorable.

Yours

TÉLÉMAQUE.

XII.

TELEGRAM, 14TH JUNE, 1895.

thanks for letters could not answer been through rather a trying time so glad you return Telemaque.

XIII

TELEGRAM, 16TH JUNE, 1895.

so sorry to hear of your illness shall be delighted to lunch Wednesday look forward to seeing your treasures Telemaque.

LAST LETTERS OF

XIV.

(June, 1895.)

114 Cambridge St.,
S.W.

DEAR MENTOR

I don't know whether you left Berlin before my last wire arrived to say I should be delighted to lunch with you Wednesday.

Yours

TELEMAQUE.

XV.

(June-July, 1895.)

DEAR MENTOR,

I shall be delighted of course to go with you to the colour music. Thanks so much for the magazine. M. & myself most pleased to dine with you next Sunday.

Yours

TELEMAQUE.

XVI.

(June-July, 1895.)

114 Cambridge Street,
Warwick Sq., S.W.

MY DEAR MENTOR

I really havn't the faintest idea what you mean by a declaration of war. Of course I'm dreadfully ashamed of having forgotten your prior invitation. You ought to know by this time how very unimpressionable my memory is. However it retains to-day, at 2 o'clk.

Yours

A—.

XVII.

(July, 1895.)

114 Cambridge St.,
Warwick Sq., S.W.

I am most grieved not to be able to go with you to the play last night, and I fear I shall be unable to see you this evening.

I can't answer your letter this morning. What afternoon will you be alone. I want to see you about something.

Yours

A. B.

XVIII.

(Autumn, 1895.)

10 and 11 St. James's Place,
S.W.
Thursday.

I wish I had illustrated a book recently! but all my essays in art and letters have been kept for a new magazine I am bringing out.¹ That will contain a Christmas card; and the beginning of a fairy tale (illustrated) by myself & also some verse. Did not Frau Ida Doxat sing quite splendidly at the last Mottl concert?

Yours

AUBREY BEARDSLEY.

¹ The Savoy. It began to appear in January, 1896.

XIX.

(Winter, 1895.)

10 and 11 St. James's Place,
S.W.
Tuesday.

MY DEAR * * *

I shall be most pleased to come to lunch
today.

Yours

AUBREY BEARDSLEY.

XX.

10 and 11 St. James's Place,
S.W.
Saturday, 2 o'clk.

MY DEAR * * *

I shall be so pleased to come to lunch on
Monday. I am ashamed of myself not to have begun
the sketch but there shall be no more delay.

Yours

AUBREY BEARDSLEY.

XXI.

10 and 11 St. James's Place,
S.W.

MY DEAR MENTOR

So good of you to call for me. I will be
ready at ten minutes past eleven.

Yours

AUBREY BEARDSLEY.

XXII.

(Dec., 1895.)

The Savoy.

Effingham House, Arundel Street,
London, W.C.

MY DEAR MENTOR

I saw the Michelet in a second hand book shop in Hampstead Rd. (near Robert St.). It was in about twenty volumes.

I am beginning the sketch presently.

Please forgive this commercial paper.

Yours

AUBREY BEARDSLEY.

XXIII.

(December, 1895.)

10 and 11 St. James's Place,
S.W.
Thursday.

MY DEAR MENTOR

I am indeed pleased at the prospect of beginning the long talked of portrait. I hope it is going to be great success.

Let me know directly you can give me a sitting.

I may be in Paris at the opening of the New Year, but only for a few days.

Yours

AUBREY BEARDSLEY.

LAST LETTERS OF
XXIV.

(Dec., 1895—Jan., 1896.)

10 and 11 St. James's Place,
S.W.

MY DEAR MENTOR

I shall be delighted to dine with you on the 8th. Last night I went to one of Dolmetsch's old instrument concerts. It was quite the most delicious and delicate entertainment. With kindest regards to Miss N.

Yours

AUBREY BEARDSLEY.

XXV.

(Dec., 1895—Jan., 1896.)

10 and 11 St. James's Place,
S.W.

MY DEAR MENTOR

Very many thanks for your review of ----'s career. I told you how much I admired it when you read it to me; and upon reading myself I think it even more admirable.

I am just beginning some pictures for an edition of the "Rape of the Lock".

Yours

AUBREY BEARDSLEY.

XXVI

(Dec., 1895—Jan., 1896.)

10 and 11 St. James's Place,
S.W.

MY DEAR MENTOR

I shall be most delighted to sup with you
to-morrow.

Yours

AUBREY BEARDSLEY.

XXVII.

(January, 1896.)

10 and 11 St. James's Place,
S.W.
Thursday.

MY DEAR

I have not yet heard from R. R. if [he] can
come with me on Monday or no. I will write to you
immediately I get his answer.I am longing to see the Aphra Behn you have just got
and the Quinault. Oronooko is the only thing I have read
of Astrea's: her comedies must be delightfully careless.

Yours

AUBREY BEARDSLEY.

XXVIII.

(January, 1896.)

10 and 11 St. James's Place,
S.W.
Sunday.

MY DEAR

I have just heard from R. R. He will be most
delighted to be brought to lunch with you to-morrow.

LAST LETTERS OF

am quite well again. Mrs. W. called soon after left me on Friday. So sweet of her I thought.

Yours

AUBREY BEARDSLEY.

XXIX.

5th June (1896).

17 Campden Grove,
Kensington.

MY DEAR * * *

I know you will be sorry to hear Dr. Symes
ompson has pronounced very unfavourably on my
dition to-day. He enjoins absolute quiet and if
sible immediate change. Yet I despair of ever
ing away, there are so many difficulties in the way!
n so sorry but I shall have to give up the pleasure of
ing with you on Thursday.

am beginning to be really depressed and frightened
ut myself.

Yours

AUBREY BEARDSLEY.

[XXX.]

(1896.)

Spread Eagle Hotel,
Epsom, 6th July.

MY DEAR Z—

It was most charming of you to send me a
y of your new book of verses. It has only just reached

me this morning (by the way of Crowborough), and I have been dipping into it furiously all through breakfast.

What I have read has fairly delighted me.

Your muse always seems to me to be the most successful creature and the most satisfactory. Please accept my warmest congratulations on the achievement of the spiritual poems.

Yours

AUBREY BEARDSLEY.

XXXI.

(July, 1896.)

Spread Eagle Hotel,
Epsom.

MY DEAR

I was so glad to have a letter of you. I should be delighted to come over to —— any day. Some afternoon this week I fancy L. S. is coming down to see me, so I am not quite certain if I am free for the moment. I will write again to-morrow.

I heard of M. C.'s dinner from a friend who was just going on to it. Were you at any of the performances of *Tristan*? I read the announcements of it with jealous eyes.

— The forty thieves will be my Xmas book. It's great fun illustrating it, but it is hard work, & will take me some time to finish. Only very evilly disposed persons

would grumble at the hot weather. My only trouble now is my entire inability to walk or exert myself in the least.

Yours

AUBREY BEARDSLEY.

XXXII.

(July, 1896.)

Spread Eagle Hotel,
Epsom.
Tuesday.

MY DEAR * * *

I am so sorry my stay here has to come to an end before I have been well enough to drive over to —. I should like so much to have seen you. M. has gone down to Boscombe today to find some little home for me, & has just wired to me that "Pier View" will be my address.

I had the pleasure of meeting Fr. M'Daniel two or three years ago when I was staying at —, he is a dear old thing, I'm sure you must find him vastly entertaining.

So interested in what you tell me about your book & the Italian brigandage. I have just completed a set of illustrations to Lysistrata, I think they are in a way the best things I have ever done. They will be printed in pale purple. Juvenal number six is my next book, & I am making the translation as well as the pictures.

The attacks of hæmorrhage have been a dreadful nuisance.

ante, last week I had a severe one & I have been an invalid ever since.

I look forward very much to "— — —," I hear that proofs are all corrected so I imagine that the novel will be out in October.

Very many thanks for your letter.

Yours

AUBREY BEARDSLEY.

I go down to Boscombe tomorrow morning.

XXXIII.

(September, 1896.)

Pier View, Boscombe.
Wednesday.

MY DEAR * * *

• The child who only parts his hair when a stranger comes to lunch must be very charming.

My breathing is a little better here but the cough distresses me a good deal, & the doctor has just given me rather a bad account of myself. He is afraid he cannot stop the mischief. To compensate, my little scribblings go on well and I think the Juvenal will be an interesting book.

My pictures in pale purple are for Aristophanes & not Donnay.

How I envy any one who is able to spend the summer on the Thames, and be within punting distance of the ever gracious Hampton Court. I am beginning to feel

that [I] shall be an exile from all nice places for the rest of my days. Boscombe is only tolerable, I am so disappointed with it.

By the way our publisher has now a new address, 4 and 5 Royal Arcade, next door but one to the admirable Goodyear.

Yours

AUBREY BEARDSLEY.

XXXIV.

(September, 1896.)

Pier View, Boscombe.

MY DEAR * * *

You must forgive me for leaving at least two delightful letters, unanswered, for so long. Nearly a month ago I had to go up to town on urgent business, & the trip brought on a most serious attack of haemorrhage. I am only just recovering & am not allowed to leave my room. I shall spend the winter here for I shall not be strong enough to travel further South. It seems I shall never be out of the wood.

Y. Z. writes to me that you will be back in town next week. I am beginning to think of London like some untravelled yokel.

Could you let me have the address of your French publishers, I have utterly mislaid my copy of your book.

S. tells me that he has prepared an album of 50 of

my drawings, to appear this Autumn. I look forward to seeing it very much. It is I believe to contain an iconography.

Yours

AUBREY BEARDSLEY.

XXXV.

(September, 1896.)

Pier View, Boscombe.

Saturday.

MY DEAR * * *

“Le frisson de Paris” seemed almost too good a title to be true.

I wonder what a picture of mine to Esther Waters would be like? How charming of George Moore to say that I should do it well.

I wish I could have been at the children’s dinner party. I recollect the one I came to.

With a piercing wind from the North East, the question of hot water bottles becomes important, & I will think of Cotsford Dick’s advice. We had our first snow here today.

The S. case certainly makes horrid reading, still I shall look forward to your précis and study of it.

I am now in the hands of a very charming and skilful dentist here who promises to do great things for my teeth, six of which are under his care. I don’t know when the operations will come to an end. It seems I am only just

in time to save great trouble with my mouth. I shall be interested to hear of your visit to Wormwood Scrubbs. Will it include a sight of the prisoners? What a painful experience.

I have just seen a most wonderful illustration of Prud'hon's for the episode of the bosquet de Clarens in "La Nouvelle Héloïse". I fairly melted over it. The défaillance of passion is marvellously rendered in the figure of Julie, which is a perfect triumph of expressive drawing. It recalls strangely the Madonna in our Lady of the Rose garden of Francia.

Prud'hon's picture is simply ravishing, & has made me happy for a moment.

Yours very affectionately •

AUBREY BEARDSLEY.

XXXVI.

(1st October, 1896.)

• Pier View, Boscombe.

MY DEAR * * *

The chocolats were delicious.

Florence St. John must be perfectly charming in the little genius. She is always "adorable".

I was interested to hear that the allegorical photograph was attributed to Durer. The picture has, I believe, in its time been attributed to every painter except Durer: It is a beautiful thing, so clear and mysterious. I have just begun a narrative version of Wagner's "Das Rhein-

gold" (the most amusing thing he ever wrote). Most of the pictures for it are already finished. S. has just sent me a Savoy. I rather like this number. No. 7 will contain a translation of mine from the "Hail and farewell" poem of Catullus. I have also made a picture for it.

We are having such a soothing spell of still, warm weather here, troubled only by the wasps, that bring however with them a sort of memory of orchards.

I am glad that January will bring me a new brochure of yours.

What sort of book has Ellis made and who has he found to publish? I am amused at what you tell me about the way he treats our Lord and all the Saints. How treacherous is the illative sense!

Always yours

AUBREY BEARDSLEY.

XXXVII.

(5th October, 1896.)

Pier View, Boscombe.

MY DEAR * * *

Thank you again for the books. The Diderot in two volumes—that gives me so much more than I asked for—is especially nice. Le Rouge et le Noir is an adorable book, and I am going to re-read it at once. No I don't think that the little French bookseller

has any sort of claim against me, so my address will be quite unfruitful in his hands. Considering that his shop is so small he really has a wonderful number of books "in stock". I don't remember ever having had to *order* anything from him.

Thanks very much for your account of the comedy first night. I should love to see Nina Boucicault in the piece.

What with your green and yellow-backed books, your informing letter, a new screen in my room, the first fire I have lit this autumn, some nice drawings I have made, and the collected works of Friedrich Nietzsche, I am feeling quite gay this morning. The weather too is perfectly lovely, and jolly winds are driving white clouds over the bluest sky.

I am always yours

AUBREY BEARDSLEY.

XXXVIII.

(October, 1896.)

Pier View.
Wednesday.

MY DEAR * * *

You sent me some most delicious chocolates. It was so good of you. Eida must have been most entertaining. How charming of the Japanese to risk a lacquered warship in a real battle.

I can't tell you how much I have been enjoying the

Diderot. He is an extraordinarily attractive writer. I was particularly interested in the "Salons".

I shall be most curious to hear what Gilbert Parker's play is like. The book was so clever.

I am beginning to feel stronger every day, we are having such beautiful weather. It seems I have still a chance to turn the corner.

Please tell me more of your controversy with M. Féré. *

A certain publisher has been begging me to illustrate Pilgrim's Progress for him. He says that my lately acquired knowledge of suffering has fitted me perfectly for the task! All this was suggested to him by a little picture I sent him of "Tannhäuser returning to the *Horselberg*".¹

It is really too kind of you to invite me to more books. However, I cannot resist the temptation. If there is such a thing as an illustrated account of the Brighton Pavillion I should love to have it. And has any history been written of Napoleon's early life & first Italian campaigns? I ask for the book on the Brighton Pavillion in order to get help for some architectural backgrounds I have been thinking of.

But you musn't allow me to trouble you so recklessly.

I am always yours

AUBREY BEARDSLEY.

¹ Included in "A Second Book of Fifty Drawings," 1899.

LAST LETTERS OF
 'XXXIX.

(October, 1896.)

Pier View, Boscombe,
 Bournemouth.
 Monday.

MY DEAR * * *

I did not know who had sent me the *Gaston Latour*. Thank you so much for it. I knew no more of the book than its title, & was deeply interested to read. All that part about Ronsard delighted me.

The 1853 reminiscence of Augustus Hare is instructive & amusing.

No I have not read *The Island of Dr. Moreau*? Is it a romance? So good of you to say you will send it me.

I have never been to the church in Spanish Place, what is it like? Monsignor Croke Robinson preached on a strangely suggestive subject.¹ I wish I had heard him. There is down here a beautiful little church served by the Fathers of [the Society of] Jesus, I hope when I am able to go out, to assist at their services.

I do hope you have not troubled about the Brighton Pavillion; such a foolish idea of mine to want it. I look forward much to the book on Napoleon & his early conquests. I can never bring myself to read far into his life--for sentimental reasons.

Diderot continues to rejoice me. So serious & so amusing.

¹ *Guardian Angels.*

If is really too good of you to allow me to tell you of my bookish wants. My only immediate want is some illustrated account of Claude Lorrain; though perhaps what would be best, would be four or five photographs of his seaport & Arcadian pieces.

Yours

AUBREY BEARDSLEY.

Thank you so much for your kind Paters,¹ I fear I am a sorry beadsman.

XL.

(October, 1896.)

Pier View.
Thursday.

MY DEAR * * *

I should be indeed grateful for an introduction to any of the Jesuit Fathers here.

I recollect reading Erewhon at school and enjoying it immensely. I remember so well it being lent me as a very precious book and with grave doubts on the part of the lender as to whether it was not altogether too deep for me.

My little trouble continues, but is somewhat abated.

Sunshine has been with us too; such a blessing.

All sorts of delays seem to have beset the path of my album, but it will appear well before Christmas, I am longing to see it.

¹ Pater nosters.

And what of — — — ? With it I begin the list of books I am without and should like.

Pater's *Renaissance*.

Meinholt's *Sidonia the Sorceress* (Reeves & Turner).

Laclos' *Liaisons dangereuses*.

Evelina.

Gray's Poems.

The *Shaving of Shagpat*.

Morley's *Voltaire*.

Diderot and the *Encyclopédists*.

Voltaire's *Mélanges Littéraires*.

Théâtre (any volume containing "Mérope,"
"Zaïre," "Mahomet").

I have been reading lately some of George Sand's earlier novels, *Mauprat*, *Indiana*, *Horace*, etc. How abominably she has been plundered by every one since.

What was the *Gaiety* piece like?

I am yours very affectly

AUBREY BEARDSLEY.

XLI.

(October, 1896.)

Pier View, Boscombe,
Bournemouth.

MY DEAR * * *

Thank you so much for the *Claude Lorrain* & *The Island of Dr. Moreau*. The latter is certainly a horrible affair & very well set forth. I can't tell you how ill I am to-day.

I am quite paralysed with fear. I have told no one of it. It's dreadful to be so weak as I am becoming. To-day I had hoped to pilfer ships and sea-shores from Claude, but work is out of the question.

The *Gaston de Latour* has given me great pleasure.

Yours very affectly

AUBREY BEARDSLEY.

XLII.

(October, 1896.)

Pier View, Boscombe,

Bournemouth.

Sunday.

MY DEAR * * *.

I am all gratitude for the Browning, a perfectly delightful present! My time is being laid out royally amongst the pages. I had only one volume out of the old seventeen volume edition with me, & am quite bewildered with the sudden blaze of *all* the poems.

If *Cecilia* is a tenth part as good as *Evelina* it must be a very capital book.

The winter season is setting here rather pleasantly. Yesterday I was able to take quite a long walk, & was scarcely tired at all afterwards. So my fortnight's bleeding does not seem to have done me much injury.

It is sad not to see M. before she starts for America. I envy her the passage, boat life is so delightful.

Many thanks for all your amusing gossip. Mrs. —

I seem to have come across in some novel or other.
Edward Martyn I fancy I have met in the flesh.

I am yours very affectionately •

AUBREY BEARDSLEY.

XLIII.

(November, 1896.)

Pier View, Boscombe,
Bournemouth.
Sunday. •

MY DEAR * * *

You have sent me such a delightful green-covered volume of Voltaire's plays. I have been so cheered with it. Thank you many times.

My dear mother must have been very surprised to hear of my haemorrhage, for I had told her nothing of it. Every one in town seems to have greeted her with the news of it. There has been no return, so I suppose I may consider myself out of the wood for the time being.

I am yours very affly

AUBREY BEARDSLEY.

[XLIV.]

(5th November, 1896.)

Pier View, Boscombe.

MY DEAR Z.,

I should have written to you before, had I been well enough—to thank you for the parcel of books

you 'sent. Sidonia is such an enchanting book. Thank you for all of them. I have had such a trying time with my untractable lung. Neither rest or fine weather seem to avail anything. How delightful is what you tell me about the Melanesian & his string ; perfectly delicious.

Yours ever

AUBREY BEARDSLEY.

XLV.

(November, 1896.)

Pier View.

MY DEAR * * *

Such a nice little packet of French books has reached me. How kind of you to send them. Catulle Mendes is a great favourite of mine. The conversational pieces of Maurice Donnay are most entertaining ; I knew nothing of him before, except Lysistrata, which you have of course read & seen acted.

I am a little better to-day.

Yours very affectly

AUBREY BEARDSLEY.

XLVI.

(November, 1896.)

Pier View, Boscombe.
Wednesday.

MY DEAR * * *

Thank you so much for the packet of primrose-covered books. Naïs Micoulin is a Zola I have never

read. P. has just sent me the synopsis of a Wagnerian drama he has written & wishes me to illustrate. It is rather fine.

How strangely competent & unnervous one feels with a new & unpublished work. Have you noticed that no book ever gets well illustrated once it becomes a classic. Contemporary illustrations are the only ones of any value or interest.

My neuralgic pains have found a little relief from phanacetin, so I am less of a wreck to-day.

Yours ever affectionately

AUBREY BEARDSLEY.

XLVII.

(November, 1896.)

Pier View, Boscombe.

MY DEAR * * *

I am up a little today, & hasten to write to you. I know Fr. C. by sight only, I recollect him attending the Oratory in his lay days.

I am so entertained by the study of Zola. I did not know such a book had been published. The idea of such interviews is good enough if you could imagine every distinguished person allowing himself to be really frank. Zola was a capital person to start the series, as he has the reputation of being a good bourgeois with no need to be reticent about his tastes. The memory tests were interesting, especially those in which he failed to attribute.

well-known passages to their right authors. I recollect in an interview with Zola in "Le ---? illustre" some years ago, he said that *Manon Lescaut* was a book he had read many times, & always had beside him.

Thanks many times for the volume. I still continue in a very doubtful state, a sort of helpless, hopeless condition, as nobody really seems to know what *is* the matter with me. I fancy it is only change I want, & that my troubles are principally nervous. I have been trying to take arsenic but it has disagreed most dreadfully with me.

I am yours always affectionately

AUBREY BEARDSLEY.

XLVIII.

(November, 1896.)

Pier View, Boscombe.

MY DEAR * * *

Thank you a thousand times for your book, a precious volume.

Yet another attack of haemorrhage, a slight one, but severe enough to keep me in bed for two days. My agony of mind is great, even at the slightest appearance of blood, for one never knows if the first few streaks are going to lead to something serious or no. It is nearly six weeks now since I have left my room. I am very busy with drawing & should like to be with writing, but cannot manage both in my weak state. I am sure you will feel it is quite pardonable for me to speak bitterly of this

weather. My room faces south west, & all my books, papers, etc., have been saturated with the damp. So I have fallen into a depressed state.

I am sending you a photograph that Cameron took of me when I was in town. I thought you might like a copy.

Yours

AUBREY BEARDSLEY.

XLIX.

(November, 1896.)

Pier View, Boscombe.
Tuesday.

MY DEAR * * *

Thank you so much for the packet of French novels. I have begun with *Restif de la Bretonne*, he is tremendously interesting, & was heretofore only a name to me. I shall read *Les Rois* next.

Half an hour ago I had a huge rock of a tooth taken out—with gas. Still I feel rather shaky after it. I'm afraid some more will have to follow. Milder measures are quite useless in my far gone state.

Yours very affectionately

AUBREY BEARDSLEY.

L.

(November, 1896.)

Pier View, Boscombe.

MY DEAR * * *

This morning's post brought me Stendhal's fragments on Napoleon, & two magisterial volumes, edited

by Masson & Biagi, of Napoleon's student writings, & notes upon his early life. I need not tell you how grateful I am for them, & how delighted with the prospect of reading.

I was tremendously interested to hear about your correspondence with the beautiful Rachilde, & will look forward to her new novel, documented from your book.

No, you never told me anything about a blind man with a romantic history; still I am sorry he has taken to drink.

- Sulerman's play must be charming in Cosmopolis.

It is most kind of Father ---- to write to the Fathers down here about me. A Father called, & was most charming & sympathetic.

I am indeed interested to hear all news of your controversy on nonconformity. I hope you will resume all that is being said for & against in some future edition of your book.

I have just been lent a study of *mœurs antique* entitled *Aphrodite*. It is by Pierre Louÿs. You have I expect read it.

Yours very affectly

AUBREY BEARDSLEY.

(November, 1896.)

LI.

Pier View, Boscombe,
Bournemouth.
Tuesday.

MY DEAR * * *

Thank you so much for the volumes of
Miss Burney. I was so amused to find that they

had covers & title-pages of my own early designiing. Cecilia I have begun, & believe I shall like even better than Evelina.

In the bay here, the sea is as smooth as a shirt front, so I wish M. could have started from Southampton. I do hope her crossing may be quiet, & resting, after all her hard work.

Boats are such blessed things, one loses all sense of responsibility upon them.

I am bothered beyond words to find some little book to do pictures for. Can you think of anything for me.

I have just made rather a pretty set of drawings for a foolish playlet of Ernest Dowsons.

I wondered if *La dame aux Camélias* or *Diane de Lys* would serve my purpose?

The Lamoureux festival must be a real feast. I don't believe I shall ever hear the sound of a fiddle again.

Boscombe is ignominiously dull.

I am always yours very affectionately

AUBREY BEARDSLEY.

LII.

(November, 1896.)

Pier View, Boscombe.
Friday.

MY DEAR * * *

Thank you so much for your kind suggestions for books to illustrate. Any one of them would make a charming volume; *L'Histoire d'une Grecque*.

moderne will I think be my choice. Stendhal's *Armance* I do not know. I wonder if an English version has been made of *Adolphe*. Where ought I to look to find out something about Choderlos de Laclos. I am anxious to acquaint myself with his life.

I have just had a letter of M. from Queenstown. Her first day at sea passed off most successfully, & she seems quite enamoured of the life on board. I must confess I envy her & should like nothing better than a sea voyage myself. I fear though a real rest is not amongst the possibilities for me.

However, from my window, on Saturdays, I can see the boats leaving Southampton.

Yes, I have made a friend here, Mrs. ——, daughter of Sir H. T. She is quite charming, & full of accounts of all the Victorian great people. She is taking me up one day to visit Lady Shelley, who has I believe a delightful collection of the poet's portraits, letters, etc. How good of you to think of friends for me here.

Yours very affectionately

AUBREY BEARDSLEY.

Father L. came to see me on Sunday. He is leaving Boscombe for a short time. He was so glad that I had Fr. Bampton's sermon with me. He corrected me most charmingly for mispronouncing Fénelon. I had said Fénelon.

What a delicious subject for a historical essay would

be the Gallic Church in the 17th century. Though it would be difficult to say much more than is sung in "Le lutrin".

By the way I hope you have not seen an atrocious portrait of me in the Magazine of Art for this month. I feel I owe an apology to all my friends for it.

LIII.

(1st December, 1896.)

Pier View, Boscombe.
Tuesday.

MY DEAR * * *

It was most charming of you to have copied out for me that little life of Laclos, I never meant you to set yourself such a task, still I am delighted to have the biographical note. I did not know that he had played so important a rôle in the revolutionary drama, & I am surprised that the wonderful "Liaisons" was written early rather than late in his career. I have long set my heart on making some pictures for the book, not "galants" in any way but severe and reticent. Prudhon would have done them to perfection.

I was delighted to find the other day, in Delacroix's Journal, an enthusiastic appreciation of a picture of Prudhon's, the portrait of the Empress Josephine. Do you know it? It is quite one of the most beautiful portraits in the world.

The idea of Adolphe, translated by J. G. & illustrated with something of mine, smiles on me very much.

• The lung gives me little or no trouble, I suffer from Boscombe more than anything else.

I am yours always affectionately

AUBREY BEARDSLEY.

LIV.

(3rd December, 1896.)

Pier View, Boscombe.
Thursday.

MY DEAR * * *

Thank you so much for the copy of Adolphe. I am delighted at the prospect of my pictures accompanying G.'s letterpress. At Boscombe it is weather royal, sunshine & south winds. I wish I could hear it was the same with you in London, I should be sorely tempted to run up for a few days.

We have not yet heard from M. since her arrival, it seems the Bourchiers' first night was a great success.

I am surprised to find that I like almost everybody who comes to Pier View, I can't explain it to myself, even more strange is the fact that they seem to like me. This is quite a new thing in my life.

I shall feel very lonely at a new church on Christmas day. I am so accustomed to the Brompton Oratory on the great festival. The Oratory is such a loveable church.

Yours very affectionately

AUBREY BEARDSLEY.

LAST LETTERS OF
LV.

(6th December, 1896.)

Pier View, Boscombe.
Sunday.

MY DEAR * * *

I was so disappointed to hear that " — — — " will not appear till January. What a vexatious delay. Your kind invitation to — — Street & promise of fraternal care will keep my thoughts set on town. There, will surely be some prosperous weather.

I have just received the "Pageant"; two of the Moreaus (Œdipus & the Hercules) are perfectly ravishing. I often think of *your* Moreau, one of his most beautiful works.

I am glad you liked Count Valmont. The album of fifty drawings is to appear I believe this week. Yes, I recollect Mrs. W., & her nursing me through a very trying moment.

The adjournment of the S. case will give you a long rest from your work of criticism. I have been learning a great [deal] about the proceedings from some one who has been in court.

I am delighted that G. has begun the translation of Adolphe. I wish I might put my hand to the pictures at once.

Has Rachilde sent her book in MS. or proof? A reading of a book in handwriting is wretched work.

I grieve much that you have been unwell.

My own health becomes daily, it seems, more satisfactory, though a sharp walk this morning left me rather breathless. Still I can scarcely call myself an invalid now.

Some rather good concerts are being given in Bournemouth, & I hope to be able to get to them, but am a little frightened of being out after sunfall. You must have had a great festival with Lamoureux.

I should like to have heard so much the arrangement of music from Siegfried, Act II.; called I think "woodland voices" or "murmurs". I read about it.

I am yours very affectionately

AUBREY BEARDSLEY.

LVI.

(December, 1896.)

Pier View, Boscombe.
Sunday.

MY DEAR * * *

A fit of hard work has dispelled my depression.

Yes, we were all shocked by the earthquake that made a fruitful subject of conversation at that morning's breakfast. The season of Advent gave quite an alarming point to the disturbance at the moment it was felt.

The weather in London just now must provoke anguish in the soul of every one except the Marchesa. Down here there is sunshine, but very capricious in its favours,

which are withdrawn at a minute's notice. I have not ventured out since my last disastrous walk.

Unfortunately Pier View is situated half-way up a hill, so I have no level promenade at hand.

Every one is leaving for Christmas, & an entirely new set of boarders arrive for the feast. I lose thus many old friends.

The mother of the late Slade Professor at Cambridge is staying here now. She has been telling me much of her son. He was indeed a wonderful person. I don't remember ever having met Kegan Paul.

There are some perfectly charming pictures in the Saturday Review supplement for Christmas. You have seen them of course.

This afternoon I have spent interviewing myself for the Idler, & hope I have not said too many foolish things. We have long letters from M. She does not love New York. I look forward to her return very much; it would be so nice if I could live in London, if for only the spring & early summer of next year.

M. & myself might set up temporary house together. I feel that we shall be better friends than ever after such a long separation, & six months of this horrid place will have made me abjectly thankful for the smallest gaieties & pleasures in town.

I am yours very affectionately

AUBREY BEARDSLEY.

• LVII.

(December, 1896.)

• Pier View, Boscombe.

MY DEAR * * *

There is quite a summer sun pouring into the room; delightfully unseasonable. My doctor this morning gave me a good character, & does not look upon London as being utterly impossible for me. I am so glad you are pleased with the album. There are many faults, alas, in its "get up" owing to perfectly indecent haste in preparation. The more serious faults in the book I cannot excuse so readily. I was delighted at what you told me of Rachilde's letter. I wonder what Pilgrim's Progress will be like? I have never read the book.

How sad it is that Christmas, the most beautiful of all the feasts, should have grown to be so displeasing a season to almost everybody. Nobody at Pier View but grumbles at its approach. I wish I had known you two years ago when I & M. had such a lovely Christmas tree, hung with such pretty things. I recollect some volumes of Verlaine; & a very malicious caricature of Whistler by myself were upon the branches.

I shall think of M. much on the 25th. She will be on English soil I hope. Toronto most probably.

The edition of the *Liaisons Dangereuses* is beginning to take shape at last. Each letter (there are 170 odd) will have a separate decorative or illustrative initial.

There will be 10 full page illustrations; & a frontispiece to each of the two volumes. The whole to be printed on art paper.

I am yours very affectionately

AUBREY BEARDSLEY.

LVIII.

(December, 1896.)

Pier View, Boscombe.

MY DEAR * * *

I have not had many returns of blood since the first & rather violent outbreak. You are quite right in your expectation that the attacks would now be thrown off more easily. My breathing was only affected on the first day, & has since become (what I have grown to look upon) as normal. Still it makes me nervous about getting out. The weather too is against me. I have been whiling away my semi-convalescent moments with Zola's Rome, in its thoroughly bad English dress. I always melt over descriptions of the South & sunshine. You have of course read the book, & will recollect the very ludicrous passages about Botticelli.

I have been suffering dreadfully from depression, a condition which seems to me next door to the criminal.

I am yours always affectionately

AUBREY BEARDSLEY.

LIX.

(1896.)

Pier View, Boscombe,
25th Dec.

MY DEAR * * *

I thought of you this morning, though I was unable to assist at any service. Mother has given me a very interesting life of Bossuet, & Liguori's little book on the Blessed Sacrament. Every one has been very kind here. The children of the house have had perfectly ravishing toys sent them, one a doll's house ~~with~~ lifts, electric bells, baths, etc. To say nothing of a perfectly parisian cook, an obedient staff of servants, & a duchess, by the look of her, to be served by them.

• • • Yours very affectionately

AUBREY BEARDSLEY.

LX.

(December, 1896—January, 1897.)

(In pencil.)

Pier View, Boscombe.

MY DEAR * * *

I fear my much looked forward to visit in the New Year will never be paid. I have broken down again most unexpectedly. The attack came on out of doors & I had some way to walk in a dreadful state before I could get any help. Luckily I was able to find

my way to a drinking fountain & a bath chair. So all begins over again. It's so disheartening.

Yours very affectionately

AUBREY BEARDSLEY.

LXI.

(January, 1897.)

(In pencil.)

Pier View, Boscombe

MY DEAR * * *

Just a line to give you rather bad news of myself. I have for the moment collapsed in all directions & am frightening the doctors not a little. All this is unexpected & unexplained. As soon as I am strong enough to move, I am to be taken to some more bracing place.

I am yours always affectionately

AUBREY BEARDSLEY.

LXII. .

(January, 1897.)

Pier View, Boscombe.

MY DEAR * * *

I can't tell you how much pleasure the little Watteau has given me. A Royal treat. It is a delicious volume, & contains for me so many new friends as well as the old. The coloured frontispiece is adorable, I shall try to find out who made the block. How very

generous the publishers have been with their illustrations,
& how good their choice.

I really feel better since I opened the parcel.

LXIII.

(January, 1897.)

Muriel, Exeter Rd.,
Bournemouth.
Saturday.

MY DEAR * * *

It has been weary waiting to write to you. But at last I am strong enough to trail a pen. Thank you very much for many charming letters. . . . Your sweet friendliness helps me over such alarming difficulties. I must write you a much longer letter in a few days when I am feeling stronger.

I miss too "Le chat malade" in the little volume of Watteau.

Yours very affectionately

AUBREY BEARDSLEY.

Do you know Sainte Beuve's "Volupté"?

LXIV.

(January, 1897.)

Muriel, Exeter Road,
Bournemouth.

MY DEAR * * *

I hope your hand is not being too obstinate. Alas that the education of the left hand is considered

unnecessary. Mine is quite useless to me even in the most trifling matters. I want to hear more of the youth who plays Burmese music. Y. Z. has half promised me a letter from you about him. I am afraid I have but scanty materials for *this* letter. The doctor has been able to leave me unvisited for a few days. It is such a change to feel at all hopeful. We get pleasant letters from M. who finds the new engagement very agreeable. . . . She will enjoy so much, I know, having a ~~good~~ number of new parts to study.

I look daily for some weather that may be likely to tempt you down here. Y. Z. told me of a projected tour to Provence, & that you have made Beyle your Bædeker. Will that be a spring or summer holiday?

I am yours always affectionately

AUBREY BEARDSLEY.

LXV

(January, 1897.)

Muriel, Exeter Rd.,

Bournemouth.

Monday.

MY DEAR * * *

I hope fine weather will soon tempt you to come to Bournemouth. Y. Z. wrote to me that you all thought of spending some days in February. How nice it will be to see you after such a long absence. Our new rooms are very pleasant, & I am already much more

happy. The health improves but I hardly dare to boast yet. I have just finished reading what has been for me an extraordinarily beautiful work, "Volupté". I had not the faintest idea that Sainte Beuve had written anything like it. If you have read the book it would be so charming of you to write me a few lines about it: when your hand is freed, & if you can spare me the time. My little library is in durance vile for the moment, but as the news-quarters have proved a success I shall have my books unpacked and brought to me in a day or two. Is it not good news about M.? though it is sad of course to think one will not see her for so long. Before June my lungs may have done dreadful things. Still I hope with much confidence now to see her again. A fortnight ago I really felt wretched over her delayed return. Dear girl, she would feel it dreadfully if she did not find me here when she came back.

Yours very affectionately

AUBREY BEARDSLEY.

[LXVI.]

(4th February, 1897.)

Muriel, Exeter Rd.,
Bournemouth.

MY DEAR Z.

I have to thank you for many letters. I suffer a little from the name of this house. I feel as shy

of my address as a boy at school is of his Christian name when it is Ebenezer or Aubrey.

I am so interested in your Dominican artist,¹ because I have been wondering more than I can say what his work can be like. Your letter has really made me curious. Do you know of Fr. Philpin of the Brompton Oratory? He is I believe the doyen of the community, & a considerable painter. But what a stumbling block such pious men must find in the practice of their art. —

Bournemouth apparently makes no pretence of being any better than other places in the winter. I have not yet dared to be taken out, even in a chair. Still my amendment is daily. I am amusing myself by copying a twenty years' old photograph of Sarah Bernhardt. Such a charming thing.

Yours ever

AUBREY BEARDSLEY.

LXVII.

(February, 1897.)

Muriel, Bournemouth.

MY DEAR * * *

Y. Z. has been with us to-day. He ~~ex-~~ claims at my rude health.

I have never heard Fr. Sebastian² preach, he ought to be impressive in the pulpit, with such a fine presence.

¹ Fr. Sebastian Gates, O.P.

² The Rev. H. S. Bowden.

The really winter weather looks as if it were going to give way to something milder here, & I pray that nothing so unpleasant as rain or an east wind may trouble your visit.

I have been stupidly nervous about myself for the last two days. In fact I have sulked shamefully. You must prepare your severest advice for me on the 18th. I am very anxious for you to have a chat with my doctor here. I wonder if you would. You know doctors are so reticent to their patients, & their patients' immediate relatives.... But nothing is gained by not knowing how far really the trouble has gone. I feel a little apprehensive. This is a sad scrawl, but I am in haste for the evening post.

Yours very affectionately

& as a younger brother

AUBREY BEARDSLEY.

LXVIII.

(February, 1897.)

Muriel, Exeter Rd.,
Bournemouth.
Sunday.

MY DEAR * * *

Arsenic is to my mind an atrocious drug. My doctor has insinuated it into several of my medicines, with signal failure. I have at last rebelled formally against its presence in any prescription. I was greatly interested in the portrait you sketched me of your little

friend, designated for the priesthood. I sympathise with him utterly in all his school troubles, for I know how much more bitter are these troubles to bear, than any others that come in later life. I rejoice with him in his escape from so much anguish. There will be no more tears, I am sure, at St. —'s College.

I am beginning to think cheerfully of the coming spring, to hope that I may be well enough to enjoy the sight of new leaves. Last year I was robbed shamefully of my ~~April~~ & May; I believe that accounts entirely for my persistent wretchedness ever since.

Is it true that Ed. Toulouse, who wrote the book you sent me on Zola, has been able to find no one else to submit to his questionings, & that Sarah Bernhardt turned him indignantly out of her house? I have been reading a very charming little volume of Crébillon's "La nuit et le moment," a perfectly delightful piece of work. My chances of recovery improve every day. Tomorrow I am to go out in a chair, if the weather is kind & gentle.

I am yours very affectionately

AUBREY BEARDSLEY.

LXIX.

(February, 1897.)

Muriel, Bournemouth.
Monday.

MY DEAR * * *

Your visit here was much too short. But it was so nice to get a sight of you even for so short a time.

I am sure your arrival inaugurated a season of good health for me, & fine weather. I look forward very much to seeing Fr. B. tomorrow; it was so good of you to interest him in me. We have just heard from M. The letters which announced my relapse & my recovery reached her simultaneously, so she had wherewith to weep over, & to dry her tears, all at once. I shall never be surprised to hear of her return any day.

The rooms in Manchester Street have awakened great expectations; nowadays I shall begin to count my weeks, in schoolboy fashion, as the end of the term approaches.

I am yours very affectionately

AUBREY BEARDSLEY.

LXX.

(February, 1897.)

Muriel, Bournemouth.

Tuesday.

MY DEAR * * *

In my present state *no* plan can be entirely without drawbacks. When a new one is proposed, one seems to see only the rosy side of it, but after it has been discussed a little the weak places in it become painfully evident.

I suppose I must put *all* plans out of my head for the moment, & prepare myself to abide by Doctor's decisions as soon as my health shows signs of allowing me to make an immediate move.

The weather here is a little milder today, & I am all

the happier for the change. Of course I have the 'fine weather to face now; so must not utterly loose heart. I am so frightened of not getting the full benefit of the spring & summer, & repeating my last year's mistakes. I havn't the ghost of a chance of improving unless I am able to spend some of my time out of doors, & attucks such as I am having make me very nervous about taking exercise. I feel abominably cross as well as depressed when I think of the horrid way I am handicapped.

Will you thank for me my dear *** the kind Dominican you tell me of, & Father Ambrose, & indeed all who have taken such a kind interest in my poor troubles. Father B. has just sent me an admirabse little manual of Catholic belief, & has invited me to send for him whenever I have any questions to ask.

Thank you many times for your letter so full of sympathy & encouragement. You will forgive me for being sometimes peevish & complaining, but really it is hard to remain quite tranquil with so many set backs.

I am yours most affectionately

AUBREY BEARDSLEY.

LXXI.

(February, 1897.)

Muriel, Bourne. out.
Tuesday.

MY DEAR ***

So many thanks for the numbers of the Mercure. Rachilde's novel looks very readable.

Spring is making great demonstrations here this morning. I am able to leave my window open & breathe a little wholesome air. Yesterday afternoon I had a fresh cause for worry. The blood having ceased almost entirely to come from the lung, began to flow rather copiously from the liver; at least Dr. H. supposes that the new haemorrhage comes from there. He thinks I am suffering from congestion of the liver. I was in a dreadful fright about it, & too weak & nervous for anything. Father B. called in the middle of it all & was all kindness & sympathy, & sent me such a large packet of charming books from their library to keep me amused. There has been no return of the trouble today, & I am rather laughing at myself for my fear of yesterday. I don't think anything really serious is going to happen.

I am yours ever most affectionately

AUBREY BEARDSLEY.

LXXII.

(February, 1897.)

Muriel, Bournemouth.
Wednesday.

MY DEAR * * *

Rachilde has just sent me her novel with a charming dédicace inscribed in it. I am writing her a note of thanks this evening.

Tomorrow morning I hope to be well enough to go up to the Catholic Church to see Father B. I am quite

near. The Jesuit library has just lent me Crétineau Joly's history of the order. Have you ever read it?

For the moment fine weather is having a great triumph here, but my content is sadly mixed with impatience. I think it must be exactly a year today since I broke down so tragically at Brussels. Then I suppose many people did not think I should live twelve months, whilst I should have been beside myself if I had thought that I should be in twelve months no better than I am now.

I am always yours most affectionately

AUBREY BEARDSLEY.

LXXIII.

(February, 1897.)

Muriel, Exeter Rd.,

Bournemouth.

Thursday.

MY DEAR * * *

Very many thanks for your letter & the Archives.

I shall look forward with great interest to the continuation of your article.

Miss Hawtrey's book¹ must be capital. The education of children in England is indeed a thing to make one aghast. So much prudishness at the expense of purity. Such criminal ignorance.

I am most envious of J. whose conduct of life puts no

¹ The Co-education of the Sexes.

barrier in his way to the practical acceptance of what he believes in.

Heine certainly cuts a poor figure beside Pascal. If Heine is the great warning, Pascal is the great example to all artists & thinkers. He understood that to become a Christian, the man of letters must sacrifice his gifts, just as Magdalen must sacrifice her beauty.

Do not think my dear * * * that your kind words fall on such barren ground. However I fear I am not a very fruitful soil; I only melt to harden again.

I hope Master Oswald's penny¹ will inspire a veritable chef d'œuvre. So large a price is seldom given for masterpieces of fiction. Oswald will never make a publisher.

I am yours very affectionately

AUBREY BEARDSLEY.

LXXIV.

(February, 1897.)

Muriel, Exeter Rd.,

Bournemouth.

Friday.

MY DEAR * * *

Such a burst of sunshine today, a perfect festival of light. Still it is weather to keep one over the fire, & I do not venture out. Dr. H. has been able to examine my chest thoroughly today, as blister wounds

¹ The boy offered some one a penny to write him an original story.

have healed up. I don't think' he discovered anything that could alarm me immediately. The right lung, which I am so nervous about, has got no worse, & the disease in the left has advanced but very slightly. He thinks perhaps the haemorrhage mixture I am taking is beginning to loose its astringent effects, so he has changed my medicine. I hope the new one will prove effectual, & that I shall be able to give you a better account of myself next week. At present my mind is divided between the fear of getting too far away from England, & the fear of not getting enough sunshine, or rather sun warmth near home.

I have read the chapters you indicated in Newman's book. How truly admirable they are.

I am yours always most affectionately,

AUBREY BEARDSLEY.

LXXV.

(February, 1897.)

Muriel, Exeter Rd.,
Bournemouth.
Monday.

MY DEAR * * *

I received a very acceptable parcel of books from Burns & Oates this morning; & it is you I know that I must thank for them. Thank you very much. The volumes are quite new to me. I shall read them very carefully for I fear I am sadly equipped for the fray controversial, into which one is sometimes forced to enter.

Father B. was with me this afternoon, & stayed quite a long time, so I had a much more fruitful conversation with him. I think our friendship would rapidly mature.

I feel I am really getting stronger now. How I wish I had come into Bournemouth before the winter, I might have escaped so much trouble.

I am always your very affectionate

AUBREY BEARDSLEY.

LXXVI.

(February, 1897.)

Muriel, Bournemouth.
Wednesday.

MY DEAR * * *

Father B. came to see me yesterday, but unfortunately I had not the opportunity of talking to him as much as I should have wished. He was most charming & promised to come to see me often. I felt much drawn towards him & I believe he will be a good friend of mine. He has lent me a long life of Saint Ignatius Loyola, & I am reading for the first time a history of the growth and foundation of the Company. Master Oswald's letter is admirable. I can appreciate all his wants, except the one for a watch. To live in —— Street & to serve as an acolyte at ——, is certainly an ingenious programme. I am touched to think of his childish prayers for me. I hope some day I shall have the pleasure of meeting my little beadsman. I wonder whether it would amuse him to receive some little present & letter from a stranger?

You could tell me if there was any story or picture book, or something of that sort that might please him. Do let me know. I hope ~~he~~ will not have too severe tumbles in the skating gallery of ----. It is so good of you my dear * * * to enquire about rooms for me. This letter will I suppose cross one of yours with some news of Manchester Street. The weather has been a little colder here, so I have not ventured out today. I shall miss a very kind friend at my side next time I am charioted up to the east cliff. I was so interested in what you tell me of Reichmann's book, & the remarks of Havelock Ellis in English.

I look forward to the book about George Sand, I am all gratitude. I did not know that Huygens had announced a new work. How thoughtful you are, dear * * *. I do hope I am the most grateful of creatures.

I am yours always affectionately

AUBREY BEARDSLEY.

LXXVII.

(February, 1897.)

Muriel, Bournemouth.
Friday.

MY DEAR * * *

I think a letter of mother's must have crossed yours of this morning. She tells me that she has settled to remain with me. . . .

I thought of you much at four o'clock, today.

I will tell Father B. the story of Joan. It is surely a most edifying one. Thank you so much for your suggestion as to what I might send to Oswald. Where on earth may prayer books in Tartan covers be found? I believe anybody who had lived much on mountains would have made the same choice as your Switzer. I am sure the Swiss are the real leaders of taste in Europe.

Did you have bagpipes at your dinner last night?

I am yours very affectionately

AUBREY BEARDSLEY.

[LXXVIII.]

(2nd March, 1897.)

Muriel, Bournemouth.

Monday.

MY DEAR Z.

I was so glad to get a letter from you, & such a charming copy of verses. Your last line is quite in the manner of Mons. Durant.¹ Very many thanks for the sight you have given me of the Roman Phial.

The delay caused by Glasgow & its master has only whetted my appetite for the early pages of Adolphe.

Today my observations of wind & sun led me to very false conclusions. I soon had to tell my cocher to turn back, & I find myself writing this with frozen fingers.

How is Benack?²

Ever yours

AUBREY BEARDSLEY.

¹ Dante Alighieri.

² A black kitten.

LAST LETTERS OF
LXXIX.

(March, 1897.)

Muriel, Exeter Rd.
Bournemouth.
Friday.

MY DEAR * * *

I had such a profitable talk with dear Father B. yesterday morning. I saw him at the Catholic Church. He was so kind & patient with me, & explained the creed of Pius IV. most fully.

Yes it would be pleasant to go on "famously". Perhaps I shall.

My nerves certainly are a different thing now to what they were two or three months ago. Drawing of course tires me on account of the mere physical exertion required when I attempt to bring anything to completion. Still I can plan out things easily now. I am also writing a little again. Cazotte has inspired me to make some small contes. I have one on hand now called "The Celestial Lover". I hope it will be good. I am also making a coloured picture for it. Please forgive all this but I have nothing more notable to tell you of myself. I am all gratitude for so much good natured weather; even London I believe is behaving itself nicely.

What a pretty naive letter Oswald writes.

I am beginning to marvel at my continually increasing capacity for drinking milk. It is simply Providential.

I am yours ever very affectionately

AUBREY BEARDSLEY.

LXXX.

(March, 1897.)

Muriel, Bournemouth.
Thursday.

MY DEAR * * *

Mariéton's very interesting volume arrived this morning. Thank you so much for it. What a nice ample creature George Sand is. Like a wonderful old cow with all her calves. I recollect, long ago, in my first boyhood, beginning a novel, the heroine of which became sadly spoiled by reading *Lélia*. She also refused to eat at meals, but carried bonbons & sweet biscuits about with her in her pocket. I have quite forgotten her name. I am reminded of her by the first pages of the "Histoire d'Amour," & by the pangs of hunger I am suffering just at this moment. Dinner not to appear for another hour, & no confiserie at hand.

Spring cleaning is going forward at Muriel today, which has made me nervous & cross, it is so trying to hop about from one room to another.

I am receiving long lectures here, from pillars of the Anglican faith, à propos of my communications with the kind Fathers of the Sacred Heart.

I am always yours very affectionately

AUBREY BEARDSLEY.

LAST LETTERS OF
LXXXI.

(March, 1897.)

Muriel, Exeter Rd.,
Bournemouth.
Wednesday.

MY DEAR * * *

So many thanks for —— ——, welcome enough after so many delays in its coming out. How nice it looks. Visitors & some unavoidable letter writing, have not left me time to get far into the charming & witty book, but with five chapters to my credit may I congratulate you on a delightful piece of work. March has set in here in fine seasonable style, with winds that humble the pines & have taken ~~out~~ a great part of the roof of Newlyn's hotel.

Father B. has just spent a few minutes with me & has lent me such a beautiful life of St. Aloysius, full of the most charming pictures. I am very grateful to you for having introduced so kind a friend to me as Fr. B.

I have finished Mariéton's book on Sand & Musset. With the recollection I have of a portrait — seen somewhere of George Sand, the love stories seem to me inexplicable. I am devoured with curiosity to see some of Alfred de Musset's drawings.

I am yours always very affectionately

AUBREY BEARDSLEY.

LXXXII.

(March, 1897.)

Muriel, Exeter Rd.,

Bournemouth.

Sunday.

MY DEAR * * *

I am up a little today. This last attack of mine has been rather venomous & is rather obstinate too. It upsets all my plans. Dr. H. speaks more seriously of my condition & is a little frightened of his promise to allow me up to Town. It will be hard for me to give up my trip to London. I counted on it so much, & thought of it as something certain. Still I suppose I must be resigned about it. It *would* be wiser no doubt to move to a place where I could rest straight off for five or six months. Dr. H. spoke of one or two places in Brittany, he seems to be loosing faith in England for my case. Do give me your best advice dear * * * about it all. You told me of some place (near Bordeaux was it not) that you knew & liked. I fancy I can count my life by months now.

Father B. has spent this afternoon with me. He was most kind & sympathetic & we had much to talk about.

I am always yours most affectionately

AUBREY BEARDSLEY.

LXXXIII.

(March, 1897.)

Muriel, Bournemouth.

Monday.

MY DEAR * * *

How thankful I am to be able to tell you that the blood appears much less frequently and in much

smaller quantities. A few days, I dare say, will see the end of it. Thank you so much for your letter and the Journal. I am grieved indeed that yours has been "the dog's life"; I hope all the worries have been transient.

Rachilde's novel will I am sure interest me much.

I have read a little about the Bl. John Berchmans in my life of S. Aloysius. Those two with S. Stanislaus Kotska make a very beautiful trinity, do they not?

I am looking forward to having dear Father B. with me this afternoon. Yes, the London delay is very trying, still I suppose I must be patient. I am going to do my best to lay in a stock of strength & health here. I am sure dear * * * you will pray that my efforts may be rewarded with success.

I am always yours most affectionately

AUBREY BEARDSLEY.

[LXXXIV.]

(19th March, 1897.)

Muriel, Exeter Rd.,
Bournemouth.

Friday.

MY DEAR Z.

I was immensely pleased with the translation from Grillparzer, & must thank you very much for letting me have a sight of it.

What is its destination?

I return it to you according to your wish. The character of Medea is most sweet & enchanting.

My health troubles have for the moment relapsed into silence, & I am left almost without anything to write about.

I wonder if you could tell me the right place for Père Goriot, in the Comédie Humaine. Should it be in the Vie Privée or the Vie Parisienne?

In the edition définitive of Balzac Père Goriot is in the Scènes de la Vie Privée, but all earlier or subsequent editions place him in the Scènes de la Vie Parisienne. It is rather important for me to be certain of his really right position, & I should be so glad if you would help me to a correct solution of my difficulty. I have no means of finding out anything here.

Such blessed weather to-day, trees in all directions are putting forth leaves.

Yours ever

AUBREY BEARDSLEY.

LXXXV.

(March, 1897.)

Muriel, Exeter Rd.,
Bournemouth.
Wednesday.

MY DEAR * * *

I have certainly made a great advance anyway, since January. It seems I had no cause for alarm with my new symptom, as there has been no return of haemorrhage. The lung too is quieting down. Dr. H. has just been in & seems quite satisfied.

This letter has been quite 'spoilt by late afternoon callers, & I have not now any time to finish it properly.

Oswald must leave to like bread & butter, an acquired taste I must admit. I have acquired it after many years of effort.

I shall look forward to the life of S. John Berchmans. I did not know that he was fully canonized, & imagined him only "Blessed".

By the way I have just got myself a paint-box, there have been quite happy results.

I must leave off here.

Yours always most affectionately

AUBREY BEARDSLEY.

LXXXVI.

(February, 1897.)

Muriel, Exeter Rd.,
Bournemouth.

MY DEAR * * *

Today I have absolutely ventured to a concert, & there has been no disastrous results. Beethoven No. 4 was given, the first time of hearing for me, & a great treat after my long exile from music. Dr. H. was at my side in attendance, ready to feel my pulse, & help me in case of calamity.

I am so glad to have the life of S. John Berchmans, it has just 'arrived. It will be so interesting to compare it with the life of S. Aloysius.

I have not yet begun the Factions. Most of my time

is spent just now in sketching out pictures to be finished later. Boussod Valadon are reproducing in colour a little frontispiece I have made for Mdlle. de Maupin. I am awfully anxious to see how it comes out. I am hoping they will do all my work for me now.

I am really feeling much brighter & stronger.

I am ever yours very affectionately

AUBREY BEARDSLEY.

[LXXXVII.]

(23rd March, 1897.)

Muriel, Bournemouth.
Tuesday.

MY DEAR Z.

A thousand thanks for your kind information, I am most grateful for it, but pray I have not given you too much trouble.

I will abide by the Edition définitive.

Such ravishing weather here.

Ever yours

A. B.

LXXXVIII.

(March, 1897.)

(In pencil.)

Muriel, Exeter Rd.,
Bournemouth.

MY DEAR * * *

I am in bed again, as you may gather from this pencilled writing, with an attack of blood spitting.

It came on this morning at 3 o'clock, rather severely, & I was dreadfully nervous. Dr. H. takes a mild view of the new trouble & thinks I shall pull round in a few days. March winds have done it. Forgive a short letter, as I must not sit up too much.

Yours ever affectionately

AUBREY BEARDSLEY.

LXXXIX.

(March, 1897.)

(In pencil.)

Muriel, Bournemouth.

Friday.

MY DEAR * * *

I am a little better today, but not yet allowed out of bed. I hope to be up tomorrow. I do pray that you will not give yourself too much trouble over the search for rooms. Really you must not, for I knew you have always so much to do & to think about.

The life of St. Aloysius is perfectly charming, what a most loveable creature he must have been. The life is written by Fr. Virgil Cepari, S.J., & is edited with a great number of interesting notes. Perhaps you know the book.

What are Captain Burrard's poems & novels like?

I am amused at the account of my dinner with Harland. I have never left him in the middle of my meal, & never at any time have I been in a boat with evening clothes. But what a pity to spoil such a charming story.

I look forward to the messages from Rachilde, Oswald,
& Fr. —. I am reading that chapter in Newman's
book.

I am always yours most affectionately

AUBREY BEARDSLEY.

XC.

(March, 1897.)

Muriel, Exeter Rd.,
Bournemouth.
Wednesday.

MY DEAR * * *

. . . The blood is still very obstinate, but
does not, I am glad to say, keep me a prisoner in bed.

You see my cough keeps re-opening the wound, in the
morning especially.

However Dr. H. thinks there is not much fear of it
becoming chronic. Oh how tired I am of hearing my
lung creak all day, like a badly made pair of boots.

One thing consoles me; I get very cheerful letters from
M. now. She seems to be having such a good time, &
to be a great success.

I suppose I may console myself a little too, with the
fact that the wind is no longer in the east. You can
hardly guess the irritation caused by an east wind to any
one in my state.

I think of the past winter and autumn with unrelieved
bitterness; what murderous weather, the most radiant

spring, the most scorching summer can never make up for the last six months.

Ill temper I am told is sometimes a sign of approaching convalescence. If it is, my dear * * *, I must not loose hope.

I am always yours most affectionately .

AUBREY BEARDSLEY.

XCI.

(March, 1897.)

Muriel, Bournemouth.
Saturday.

MY DEAR * * *

Thank you so much for all your kind efforts in Manchester Street. I am so sorry Mrs. — has no accommodation. I think the idea of an hotel (with a lift) is a very attractive one, especially as there may be some chance of M. coming back sooner, & it is so difficult to get extra rooms in lodgings. The drawbacks would be the (possibly) too heavy expense for the private sitting room—they set such a price upon them in hotels—and the arbitrary per head charges for meals. You see meals for two should *not* be double the cost of meals for one. Of course some arrangement might be made. But if the hotel turns out to be too ruinous, & our expenditure in these matters could not be controlled, then we will decide for lodgings, & should be so glad to rely on your judgment & decision in the choice of them. We will leave

Bournemouth on Tuesday April the 6th. I shall recollect the answer you have given me when I am assailed next time with cross questionings from Anglican pillars, & will make a shield of M.'s example. I'm afraid I was not able to get anything really nice for Oswald, as the little Catholic shop here did not offer very much choice of pictures. I have sent him a small picture representing the Chalice & Wafer in the Blessed Sacrament, & a little volume of miniature lives of the Saints, one for each day in the year. I hope I have done nothing wrong. I was able to take a very charming drive to-day, the sunshine & soft winds seem to do me a world of good. . . . Be assured that your brotherly affection finds a very warm response in my heart. I expect I may be seeing Fr. B. this afternoon (Sunday).

I am always yours very affectionately

AUBREY BEARDSLEY.

I had a youth from Cambridge to see me yesterday, one of the originals I fancy of the "Babe".

XClI.

(30th March, 1897.)

Muriel, Exeter Road,
Bournemouth.
Tuesday.

MY DEAR * * *

This morning, alas, saw a slight return of bleeding. Yesterday was so cold & wintry, & my

lung got into a very irritable state, therefore I was not entirely surprised at this little relapse. Dr. H. suggests that I should soon get into some "much warmer climate, but does not think I should venture further than the south of France. Of course that is a delightful programme if it is only possible to carry it out. I have asked Dr. H. to write to you about me, as he will be able to give you a much more business-like account of my present state of health than I could. You will know better how to advise me when you have heard from him. I believe in some ways that he is rather satisfied with me.

Though I often get depressed about myself, still I cannot help feeling sometimes that the end is less near for me than it seems. I know the disease cannot be cured, but its progress surely may be prevented from becoming rapid. Don't think me foolish to haggle about a few months, you will understand dear * * * how precious they may be to me for many reasons now. I am beginning to look forward to bringing out two or three pictured contes; it is good of you to give me such encouraging words.

We heard from M. yesterday. She will be home in nine weeks. The dear child has I know been very homesick all this time. How jolly it will be to see her again.

Father B. has been with me this afternoon, & to-

morrow dear * * * the kind name of brother you give me will have a deeper significance.

I will write much more about this to you tomorrow.

I am always yours very affectionately

AUBREY BEARDSLEY.

XCIII.

(31st March, 1897.)

Muriel, Exeter Rd.,
Bournemouth.
Wednesday.

MY DEAR * * *

Very many thanks indeed for your little line. . . .

This morning I was received by dear Father B. into the church, making my first confession, with which he helped me so kindly. My first communion will be made next Friday. I was not well enough to go up to the church, & on Friday the Blessed Sacrament will be brought me here. This is a very dry account of what has been the most important step in my life, but you will understand fully what those simple statements mean. I don't feel I can write a long letter to-day.

Your letter has just arrived, & I am touched more than I can say with all your loving sympathy.

I am feeling so happy now.

Good-bye my dear friend & brother, & with the deepest gratitude for all your prayers

I am ever yours most affectionately

AUBREY BEARDSLEY.

LAST LETTERS OF
XCIV.

(1st April, 1897.)

Muriel, Exeter Rd.,
Bournemouth.
Thursday.

MY DEAREST FRIEND & BROTHER

. . . I feel confident that the change will give me a new lease of life. Dr. H. thinks that on the whole Mentone will be the best place for me. . . . The move could be made next Tuesday at the earliest.

I am told to fear nothing from the journey. How thoughtful is your suggestion that some one should be with me on boat & train. The greatest help I could have would be in the matter of looking after luggage. Custom House, moving it across Paris & ~~making~~ arrangements at any Hôtel. I believe the ubiquitous Cook will be able to supply us with some one who will Pilot us all our way, & relieve one of a world of worries. I am writing to Cook's to see what can be managed. To be independent of one's luggage is, the greatest blessing a traveller can ask. I shall know more about all this in a day or so.

I can't tell you how much I look forward to the South. It is bitterly cold here just now, but I have been getting into quite a glow over a packet of Rivieran ~~photographs~~. There is, I notice at Mentone a delightful 17th century church, very similar, by the way, to one that I am putting in the background of a picture at this moment.

Father B. came to see me this afternoon, & brought me such a dear little Rosary, that had been blessed by the Holy Father. He explained to me the use of it. I feel now, dear * * *, like some one who has been standing waiting on the doorstep of a house upon a cold day, & who cannot make up his mind to knock for a long while. At last the door is thrown open & all the warmth of kind hospitality makes glad the frozen traveller.

I am writing to M. tomorrow to tell her the good news. How happy she will be about it. . . . You are truly our brother.

As I told you I make my first communion tomorrow at 11. Do think of me just then.

My great difficulty for some time yet, I fear, will be dryness & difficulty in prayer. You will I [am] sure help me in yours. Goodbye dear * * *

I am yours always very affectionately

AUBREY BEARDSLEY.

XCV.

(2nd April, 1897.)

Muriel, Exeter Rd.,

Bournemouth.

Friday.

MY DEAR * * *, MY DEAR BROTHER

The Blessed Sacrament was brought to me here this morning. It was a moment of profound joy of gratitude & emotion. I gave myself up entirely, utterly to feelings of happiness, & even the knowledge of my

own unworthiness only seemed to add fuel to the flame that warmed & illuminated my heart.

Oh how earnestly I have prayed that that flame may never die out!

My dear * * * I understand now so much you have written to me, that seemed difficult before.

Through all eternity I shall be unspeakably grateful to you for your brotherly concern for my spiritual advancement.

This afternoon I have felt a little sad at the thought of my compulsory exile from Church just now; & that the divine privilege of praying before the Blessed Sacrament is not permitted me.

You can guess how I long to assist at Mass, & you will pray, I know, that I may soon be strong enough to do so.

Goodbye dear * * *

I am yours always very affectionately
& very gratefully

AUBREY BEARDSLEY.

XCVI.

(3rd April, 1897.)

Muriel, Bournemouth,
~~Saturday.~~

MY DEAR BROTHER

Just a few lines of heartfelt thanks for your wonderfully kind gift. It is so good of you, so thoughtful. Many many thanks.

I have heard from Cook this morning & if I travel on Thursday I shall have the benefit of one of their ordinary couriers whose duty is to make all arrangements about luggage, etc. If this is settled on I should leave Bournemouth on Wednesday & spend the afternoon & night in London, staying at the Hotel at Charing Cross which is the station of departure for Folkestone.

I shall be very thankful for these few hours in Town that will give me the chance of seeing you & having a nice long talk about everything. I have heard of a good & moderate hotel at Mentone, "The ——" & have written to them about rooms & terms. Dr H. has just paid me a visit, & has consequently cut my letter rather short.

How I must thank you for your watch before the Blessed Sacrament! I have made & will make fervently the exchange you ask.

Father B. did not baptize me as he was satisfied that I had already received the Sacrament with all the necessary form. You know I have a second name that will make one of the S. Vincents my patron.

There is a S. Vincent of Lerins a Saint of Provence who should be my immediate patron now.

With much love dear * * *

✓ I am yours ever very affectionately

AUBREY BEARDSLEY.

LAST LETTERS OF
[XCVII.]

(4th April, 1897.)

Muriel, Bournemouth.
Saturday.

MY DEAR Z.

Thank you so much for your very kind & sympathetic letter, & for your thought of me on Friday morning. It is such a rest to be folded after all my wandering. I feel sadly my inability to attend any services at Church just now; it has even been impossible for me to spend a few minutes before the Blessed Sacrament, as we have been having absolutely winter weather. But I so hope there will come some fine weather that will allow me to pay a visit to the Sacred Heart before I leave Bournemouth. I have had the least possible return of my trouble this morning, & have flown to a blister for relief. Nothing serious I think is going to happen.

I am all impatience to get to the South, & I have the most entire faith in the healing qualities of Sunshine and Sunwarmth. Photographs of Mentone make it charming. It seems they are having a glorious season there, & I am told to be well prepared for the extremes of heat.

I have just been presented with a Johnson's Dictionary, a second edition in two mighty folios. They grow bigger every time I look at them.

With heartfelt thanks for all your kind wishes for my spiritual welfare.

I am ever yours

AUBREY BEARDSLEY.

XCVIII.

(5th April, 1897.)

Muriel, Bournemouth.

Monday.

MY DEAREST BROTHER

Superintendence of packing & farewell visitors have taken up all my time today, & left me but a few moments for my letter. I shall arrive on Wednesday (Waterloo) at 4.45 in the afternoon. How kind & sweet of you to come & meet me & to allow me the luxury of your carriage. I think of staying two or three days in town & getting an opinion about my state from Dr. Symes Thompson, who by the way, knows my case. Yesterday morning & this morning there have been slight returns of bleeding, & Dr. H. seems a little uncertain about allowing me such a long journey without a second advice.

As my stay in Town is to be prolonged I think some quieter hotel than the Charing Cross would be better for me, & I have written to the Windsor in Victoria Street to know if they can take us in. I hear London is very full just now & that I may have some difficulty in getting rooms.

I shall miss Father B. very much when I leave here. He has been such a kind & sympathetic friend to me, & of course has the most important place in my memory.

Please forgive such a hurried & ill written letter.

I have a heap of things to talk to you about.

Our boxes are all packed ready for ~~any~~ move anywhere.

I have just got a Garden of the Soul & a little Testament from the Catholic bookshop here. It is kept by such an amusing old Frenchwoman who has taken the deepest interest in my conversion.

Good-bye my dear * * * with best love to all.

Yours most affectionately

AUBREY BEARDSLEY

XCIX.

(6th April, 1897.)

Muriel, Bournemouth,
Tuesday.

MY DEAREST BROTHER

I have just said good-bye to Father B. He has been so kind & sympathetic all this time & I felt very sad at saying farewell. I am grateful indeed to you for having introduced me to such a good friend.

I am looking forward to tomorrow more than I can say.

The Windsor Hotel has just wired that they have rooms. I am cherishing a timid hope that there will be kindly weather for the journey to town.

With best love to all.

Yours most affectionately

AUBREY BEARDSLEY

C.

(April, 1897.)

Hotel Voltaire,
Paris. •
Saturday.

MY DEAREST BROTHER

Our travelling went off so capitally, thanks to the kind care of Dr. P. I don't know what we should have done without him.

I felt a little unwell in the train on the way to Dover but nothing happened.

The sea was beautifully calm & unruffled. From Calais to Paris my spirits & appearance improved every half hour. This hôtel has *no* lift but they seem very willing to carry me up & down stairs, & they carry me, by the way, quite nicely. Our proper rooms have not been allotted to us yet. I will give you full particulars about them when we are installed.

I think Dr. P. was surprised at the way in which I got through the move. I don't feel in the least tired.

My little stay in London was such a bright & happy one, now I [am] again looking forward to seeing you. Paris you will find looking perfectly sweet. Such delicious tender green upon the trees. From my window I have a view which pleases me more than I can say. I think of you dear * * * at every turn with affection. . . . With much love.

Very affectionately

AUBREY BEARDSLEY

CL. 4

(1897.)

Hotel Voltaire, Quai Voltaire,
Paris, 11th April.

MY DEAREST BROTHER

If I only dared to boast I should give you a very flourishing account of myself, health & spirits. I scarcely feel any fatigue from walking, & I am spending just now a good deal of time out of doors. The weather is still rather cold, but there is delicious sunshine today. We have not yet been able to move into our right rooms at the Hotel, & for the moment I suffer mild discomfort on floor the fourth.

I like the Voltaire very much, particularly for its situation. A real drawback, however, is that I shall not be able to get a private sitting room, not even a *tiny* salon; but my bed is in an alcove, & curtained off, leaves me quite a nice room for the day. There is a charming book shop one door from the Voltaire, I have just asked for their catalogue, & bought such an interesting book on Molière & the Comédie Italienne, that has very amusing cuts.

The nearest Church to me is S. Thomas d'Aquin, in Rue du Bac, a large handsome place, nice & warm too; I feel quite strong enough now to attend services.

Thank you so much for the Golden Manual, it must be surely quite the best book of its kind.

I rejoice greatly at being here again, not so long ago I found myself shedding real tears at the thought of having

seen Paris for the last time. How surprised M. will be when she knows our latest move, & enchanted too at the prospect of joining me in the city beautiful. I have just written to her.

It is quite wonderful how well Paris air suits my trouble, I am thankful indeed to Dr. P. for his sage advice. You cannot imagine how kind & thoughtful he was all through our voyage here, I had not a thing to trouble about from beginning to end of the journey.

I write this at a Café that gets very full during the entr'actes at the théâtre Français, where a matinée of L'Avare is in progress.

Goodbye dear * * *, I look forward much to your arrival.

Love from us to all.

With much love very affectionately yours

AUBREY BEARDSLEY.

The pen they have given me has compelled me to reverse my writing.

CII.

(1897.)

Hotel Voltaire, Quai Voltaire,
Paris, 12th April.

MY DEAREST BROTHER

I still keep so wonderfully well & am able to be out of doors a great deal. I look back with amazement now at my little tentative walks on the cliff at Bournemouth.

I spent such a happy half hour this afternoon at S. Sulpice (my favourite Church in Paris). You were recollected, dear * * *, very affectionately in my poor prayers, sadly stumbling & imperfect things as yet.

S. Theresa's life of herself is indeed a brilliant work. I had not the faintest idea that she had written anything so important; I am very grateful to you for having given me her works.

Father Ollivier has been preaching with most extraordinary success, his sermons are being printed as they are preached & are being sold everywhere. I have just bought the last published "Sur l'Infaillibilité de l'Eglise enseignante," I wish I could have heard him.

The weather is perfectly good natured, but not splendid yet.

Goodbye dear * * *

With much love

Yours most affectionately

AUBREY BEARDSLEY.

CIII.

(1897.)

Hotel Voltaire, Quai Voltaire,
Paris, 13th April.

MY DEAREST BROTHER

So many thanks for your two letters just received.

I have been making enquiries about rooms at some other Hotel. A suite of two bedrooms with Salon is

difficult to get at Hotels without lifts, & simply ruinous at Hotels that *have* lifts. About 40 frs. to 50 frs. a day is asked even at moderate places for the rooms we should want. Of course just now the search is made more difficult by the approach of Easter. At the Voltaire people are being turned away all day. If we stay where we are we shall come into our right rooms tomorrow. I find that the bed in mine is walled—not curtained off—& they are willing to make for me any arrangements that will add to the comfort of the room. However the chief thing in favour of this Hotel is the fine view & great open space in front of it, which will be a great blessing in the warmer weather. The service here is good & the *garçons* are most willing to chair me upstairs as often as I want to mount. Then the prices are moderate.

Would you advise me to stay, anyway till holiday times are over.

How good of you to write about me to Huysmans, I look forward to meeting him immensely.

Mother went round for me this morning to S. Thomas d'Aquin, to enquire for some one who would look after me at Easter. L'Abbé V., vicaire de S. Thomas d'Aquin, will hear my confession on Easter Sunday afternoon, & will bring me the Blessed Sacrament at 8 o'clk. on Easter Monday. I hear that my Abbé is the most charming person imaginable. It took him a long time to be able to grasp the fact that *I* was Catholique & that *mother* was not. He says they will have a most

wonderful High Mass at his church on Easter Sunday. By the way S. Thomas d'Aquin is my parish church.

The weather is perfectly lovely here today, much too hot for an overcoat, though I've worn one out of a sense of duty. I am quite another creature to what I was last week, & if no disasters are imminent you will be surprised at my improvement.

I have just picked up on the Quais a copy of *Le Parfum de Rome*. The book & print shops are an ever green joy to me. I am really happy in Paris, & have never loved it so well as this time. Best love from us to all. Goodbye dear * * *, with the greatest affection.

AUBREY BEARDSLEY.

CIV.

(April, 1897.)

Hotel Voltaire, Quai Voltaire,
Paris.
Thursday.

MY DEAREST BROTHER

Forgive my writing in pencil the pens at the *Café de la Paix* are quite impossible. Mrs. I. has been lunching with us today. She is the brightest most encouraging person imaginable, & has been lecturing me about diet. Hot water & rosbif make up her programme. I know she is right, only although the menu seems so simple, it is a difficult one really to put into practice. I have a personal experience of hot water & know what wonders it works.

I am sure Rachilde's Tuesdays are charming, I hope I shall make my bow in her Salon e'er long.

I am fairly installed in my new room now. It is quite comfortable & has a splendid view.

If I only continue to improve as I have been doing for the last few days I shall be comparatively strong & well, quite soon.

For instance today I have walked quite easily from Laperouse (opposite Notre Dame) to the Café de la Paix. Then I eat & drink more than double what I did at Bournemouth; & also sleep perfectly.

I was so interested in what you wrote about S. Thomas d'Aquin. Will you pray my dear * * * that he may intercede for me?

I was reading his life in Ribadaneyra last night. Ribadaneyra is delightful, he doesn't condescend to dates, but considers "once upon a time" quite enough for the enquiring faithful.

I am much pleased with the biography of S. Francis Borgia. We get very cheerful letters from M. Of course she has not heard yet of our wondrous move. I believe I should be strong enough to accompany her if she returned to Mansfield in the autumn. I'm sure she wont go back in any other conditions.

Goodbye dear * * *, I think so much of you always & everywhere.

With much love

Most affectionately

AUBREY BEARDSLEY.

CV.

(May, 1897.)

Hotel Voltaire, Quai Voltaire,
Paris.
Monday.

MY DEAREST BROTHER

I felt very sad when you left, I do hope I shall soon see you again, & wish you could pay us a return visit to Paris. Dr. —— has not called yet. His medicines seem to have done wonders. I had a horribly restless & wakeful night, & this morning there has been a very slight oozing of blood. Of course I am staying in doors, & do not expect any further return of the trouble. Rachilde has just paid me a charming visit; she came to carry me off to a show of Bouillon's work somewhere in the Rue Bonaparte. She was most concerned over my little relapse. I am longing to hear all about Touraine, & the beauties of Azay-le-Rideau, Chenonceaux, Chaumont, etc., etc.

I am dear * * *

With much love

Yours

AUBREY BEARDSLEY.

CVI.

(May, 1897.)

Hotel Voltaire, Quai Voltaire,
Paris.
Tuesday.

MY DEAREST BROTHER

I was so pleased to get your letter. I am quite well again today & able to get out. I'm sure you are going to have the most delicious time in Touraine.

The flowering shrubs upon the banks of the Loire sound fragrant & tender. I wonder if you will discover any ancient *hôrs* nature who have returned to their province & become honest Tourangeaux?

How very kind of Madame —— to think of sending me introductions to Roll & Henner & Eugene Muntz. Of course I shall be perfectly delighted to have them.

I mean to take your advice about meals. I believe that eating in silence & alone is dreadfully bad for the digestion.

Yesterday I felt sadly depressed over the return of bleeding; I beg of you dear * * * to help me with your prayers against these relapses, & also that I may be wise enough to avoid ridiculous little imprudences that may set the trouble going.

Goodbye, dear * * *

With much love

Yours very affectionately

AUBREY BEARDSLEY.

CVII.

(May, 1897.)

Hotel Voltaire.

Grand Café Restaurant
de la Paix,
5 Place de l'Opera,
Paris.

MY DEAREST BROTHER

The fire at the Charity Bazaar here has caused, you can imagine, the most utter consternation. Last night Cafés & Theatres were almost empty.

Everybody has lost somebody.*

Blanche writes to me this morning that several of his friends were burned, & consequently puts me off a second time for lunch.

I heard the news of the disaster first at Rachilde's whilst the fire was still burning.

I am going to D. on Friday led by Miss Fanny & J. de T.

By the way M. Davray is going to give me French lessons every day, but thereby will cut away my last excuse for being unable to speak French.

Mother is almost quite well now & able to get out.

My own poor health has suffered no further shocks. I make a point of eating beef at every meal.

Ever yours most affectionately

AUBREY BEARDSLEY.

I suppose Z. knows of *Callot's* singularly interesting eau-forte of the Martyrdom of St. Sebastian. There is a charming soldier in the background picking up the arrows that have missed the Saint.

CVIII.

(May, 1897.)

Hotel Voltaire, Quai Voltaire,
Paris.
Friday.

MY DEAREST BROTHER

... It will be delightful to have a sight of you on your way back, & I hope you will not arrive in Paris

too late for a meeting. Octave Uzanne has been telling me a great deal about Egypt as a winter home. Luxor near Cairo seems to be capital in every way & quite cheap. One can live there very well on ten shillings a day. Uzanne will give me some addresses.

I am reading a delicious book for the first time, "The Thousand & one nights," in Galland's translation. I have just finished the cover for Ali Baba, quite a sumptuous design.¹ . . .

With much love

Yours very affectionately

AUBREY BEARDSLEY.

[CIX.]

(7th May, 1897.)

Hotel Voltaire, Quai Voltaire,
Paris.
Friday.

MY DEAR Z.

I don't know at all where you would be likely to find Callot's S. Sebastian. Perhaps Armand Durand have reproduced his etchings. You would certainly be very interested in this particular one. I see that a Callot has been brought out in Leroi's series of Artistes Célèbres. It is just possible you would find the S. Sebastian in it. I am delighted to hear we shall have a chance of seeing you on your return journey.

Ever yours

AUBREY BEARDSLEY.

¹ Included in "A Second Book of Fifty Drawings".

LAST LETTERS OF
CX.

(May, 1897.)

Hôtel Voltaire, Quai Voltaire.
Monday.

MY DEAREST BROTHER

It will be quite charming to d... with you this evening. We will be with you at seven o'clk. I look forward much to hearing of your adventures at Langeais.

With much love

Yours very affectionately

AUBREY BEARDSLE

CXI.

(May, 1897.)

Hotel Voltaire, Quai Voltaire,
Paris.
Wednesday.

MY DEAREST BROTHER

The weather here is being too unfriendly for anything, so St. Germain has not yet been visited. By the way dear * * * I had meant to ask you what the formalities are in the presentation of a letter of introduction in France. I do wish you would tell me.

I am buying your bonbons to-day & tulips, & will have them conveyed early on Friday morning to Madame Vallette.

Hello's book is indeed wonderfully interesting, so

many thanks for it. I continue to progress favourably & to nurse my new strength with extreme care.

• With much love

Ever yours very affectionately

AUBREY BEARDSLEY.

[CXII.]

(14th May, 1897.)

Hotel Voltaire, Quai Voltaire,

Paris.

Thursday.

MY DEAR Z.

This is a cheap reproduction of Callot's Saint Sebastian; I hope it may be of some use to you.

Please let me know when there is anything I can do for you in Paris.

• Ever yours

AUBREY BEARDSLEY.

CXIII.

(May, 1897.)

Hotel Voltaire, Quai Voltaire,

Paris.

Saturday.

MY DEAREST BROTHER

I was so pleased to get your letter. I have just had an amusing note from Rachilde thanking me for the bonbons. I have explained to her that they were your sweets.

To-day is delightfully fine & has been spent at S. Germain. I am quite enchanted with the place; the Bois is simply Elysian. We found rooms at an hotel immediately, & our address on & after next Friday will be Pavillion Louis XIV., Rue de Pontoise, S. Germain.

You cannot imagine how pretty the Hotel is, & with such a nice garden. We are the first arrivals there this season; in fact the Hotel is not yet ready to receive any one, as the proprietors have only just closed their Hotel at Nice. The Pavillion opens on Thursday. Our rooms are most charming & cheap, 4 & 3 frs. a day respectively. We are really very lucky to have got them, I did not expect to find anything so moderate at S. Germain. The Hotel is scarcely fifty yards from the Terrace and Park. The Church of S. Germain promises to be rather sumptuous & ornate in all its doings. It is not a minute's walk from the Hotel. Indeed everything one could possibly want—including coiffeur—seems to be in or near the Rue de Pontoise.

There is an ascenseur (10 cent) at the station.

I believe the air of S. Germain will do the greatest wonders for me; it is deliciously pure & fresh.

You see my dear * * * I brim over with gratitude. . . . How I wish you could spend some of the summer with us. You will find perfectly charming accommodation at the Pavillion Louis XIV.

How kind of le Père Coubé to come & see us. I

expect his retreat is over now. I look forward much to having a sight of the house in the Rue de Sèvres.

.. Ever yours very affectionately

AUBREY.

CXIV.

(May, 1897.)

Hotel du Quai, Voltaire,
Paris.
Thursday.

MY DEAREST BROTHER

Dr. —— finds mother less well today. . . . The doctor will let her know tomorrow what her chances are of joining me soon at St. Germain.

Le Père Coubé has just paid me a most charming visit, & is going to give me an introduction to a Jesuit Father at S. Germain.

With much love

Yours very affectionately

AUBREY BEARDSLEY.

CXV.

(May, 1897.)

Hotel du Quai, Voltaire,
Paris.
Monday.

MY DEAREST BROTHER

. . . I will present the introductions as you direct.

Please forgive, dear * * *, a very short letter, as I have not yet recovered from a very severe attack of sickness which overwhelmed me yesterday. ~~was~~ ~~was~~ ~~was~~ grateful beyond ~~words~~

that the retching did not affect my lung. I expect I shall be all right tomorrow. It is so vexing to be unwell during my last few days here, especially as I have breakfasts to turn up at every day till Friday. The weather improves hourly.

It will be very kind of M. M. to call on me. I shall be very pleased to see him. If I am at St. Germain I hope he will find time to come over.

I was very interested to hear that you have become a Little Oratorian. Does not your confraternity have its services in that pretty chapel across the Oratory garden?

Mother continues to be rather unwell I am sorry to say. I feel so uneasy about her. For the moment she is not allowed to take any food; only milk & Vichy water.

With much love

Ever yours very affectionately

AUBREY BEARDSLEY.

CXVI.

(May, 1897.)

Pavillion Louis XIV.,
Rue de Pontoise,
St. Germain en Laye.

MY DEAREST BROTHER

I have arrived here quite well & safely. Mother (who is a little better today) will join me in a few days. I am quite delighted with the new place & feel better already. The cooking is good. Such nice coffee. I am sorry to say I was robbed of a note for 100 frs. just before I left. I was so wretched about it. not on account of the loss. . . . I am almost certain I know who took it.

However my sorrow was dispelled by a very pleasant lunch with Octave Uzanne, & above all by a visit to the Jesuit's house in the Rue de Sèvres. Father Coubé showed me the drawings of Jerusalem, Athens & Ca[r]thage. Rome was absent. They are wonderful drawings, & delightfully unpedantic. I took the opportunity of making my confession to the dear Father.

~ I was surprised to find they had such a large church attached to the house.

My sickness began in the train coming back from S. Germain last Saturday. It was such a hot afternoon, & nowadays I become dreadfully sea-sick *en chemin-de-fer*.

I have never heard Berlioz' Harold. In fact I know very little of his (Berlioz') music. Mottl's concert must have been a great treat, & it was a great chance to hear the whole of Harold.

I shall present my introductions here the first thing next week. I am truly grateful to have them.

With much love to all

Ever yours very affectionately

AUBREY BEARDSLEY.

CXVII.

(May, 1897.)

Pavillion Louis XIV.,

S. Germain.

Friday.

MY DEAREST BROTHER

Father Henry came to see us on the eve of Ascension. He is going to make me known to the

aumonier of the Pensionnat of S^t Thomas here, who will bring me the Blessed Sacrament whenever I communicate. The Pensionnat has a charming chapel attached to it where the mass is sung by the pensionnaires. Fr. Henry is their confessor. I was surprised when he told me that the Jesuits had three houses in Paris besides the one in the Rue de Sèvres. Their house here is the maison de campagne for the Fathers of the Rue Madame. I am going to see it some day next week.

Monsieur Bertrand has been to see us & has sent me a permission to work at the Chateau valuable for one year. He is such a charming old gentleman. I have been rather nervous & worried lately, living on thorns, but have made valiant attempts to get good out of S. Germain.

I am with much love

Ever yours very affectionately

AUBREY BEARDSLEY.

CXVIII.

(May, 1897.)

Pavillion Louis XIV.,
Rue de Pontoise,
S. Germain

MY DEAREST BROTHER

. . . This morning I was in time for a 9 o'clk mass at S. Germain. It is such a nice church, & I see from one of the confessional boxes that a Jesuit Father hears confessions every Saturday there. -

The little town here is too sweet for words; so many

charming old hotels with tablets on their gateways naming the great people who used to live there. There is a delightfully romantic one in the next street ; "Ancienne Résidence des Cardinaux Barberini et Letellier". I find it great rest to be in such a small town, ~~every~~thing is so beautifully near to one ; we have a choice of five or six places to feed at within a stone's throw of each other.

With much love

Ever yours very affectionately

AUBREY BEARDSLEY.

CXIX.

(May, 1897.)

Pavillion Louis XIV.,

S. Germain.

Wednesday.

MY DEAREST BROTHER

I have had no return of haemorrhage today, & have been able to get out for a walk in the forest. Madame B. has just been telling us what a good doctor M. L. is. I expect I shall have to pay him a visit soon to get my wretched tongue cauterised. I believe the operation is however perfectly painless.

Quite amusing people are beginning to arrive in S. Germain & in the Pavillion Louis XIV.

By the way is Lecoffre of Rue Bonaparte a publisher & seller of religious books?

Ever yours very affectionately

AUBREY BEARDSLEY.

LAST LETTERS OF
[CXX.]

(25th May, 1897.)

Pavillion Louis XIV.,
Rue de Pontoise,
S. Germain.

MY DEAR Z.

S. Germain is resting me beautifully, it is such a blessing to have no distance to cover. My sickness upset me horribly, & I am only quite well again today, the recovery being helped greatly by the excellence of the food here. The cooking by the way is rather expensive. I am surprised to hear that the Venus between Terminal Gods is for sale in the Royal Arcade. I did not know that Smithers had it.

All that I have yet seen from S. Germain, of Paris, is the Eiffel Tower & the Sacré Cœur; all between the two is lost in smoke or something. There is a charming fair going forward just outside our forest, such pretty theatres for Guignol & all sorts of fantoccini under the trees.

Ever yours

AUBREY BEARDSLEY.

CXXI.

(May, 1897.)

Pavillion Louis XIV.,
Rue de Pontoise,
S. Germain.
Tuesday.

MY DEAREST BROTHER

I have recovered thoroughly today from my little trouble. The "terrace" is going to do great things

for me. This afternoon the creaking in my lung has left me owing to several hours spent in the open. The weather is warm enough now to let me sit down out of doors so I am able to prolong my outings indefinitely. Father Henry is the name of the Jesuit Priest here, he is a ~~down~~ cheerful old man, & the most friendly person imaginable. Father Coubé most kindly wrote to him about me, so we had the pleasure of a visit from him soon after we had arrived.

He asked me if I had completed my military service yet in England, & I felt quite ashamed to confess that we were not expected ever to do anything at all for our country.

With much love

Yours very affectionately

AUBREY BEARDSLEY.

CXXII.

(1897.)

Pavilion Louis XIV.,
S. Germain, 31st May.

MY DEAREST BROTHER

I have put myself into the hands of a doctor here, of whom I have been hearing great things. He is a Dr. L. & is said to be one of the most learned & skillful doctors in France.

A painful ulcer on my tongue suggested the visit, & naturally I took the opportunity of having so valuable an opinion, on my more serious trouble, at the same time.

He says that with care there is not the faintest doubt of my entire recovery. He raised his hands in horror when he was told that I had spent a year at Bournemouth. Nothing he exclaimed could have been much worse for my case, unless it had been the South of France.

Mountain air is apparently what I require. He spoke very hopefully of my chances here, & told me of a number [of] cures effected by Forest air. The terrace he will not allow me to approach. He has ordered me to get up every morning at 4 o'cl. & take two hours airing in the Bois, then to come home, rest & sleep; & continue the promenades at my pleasure during the day. I am never to be out after 5 o'clk. & am to retire to bed early in the evening. I begin the treatment tomorrow. Dr. L. inspires the greatest confidence in me. He made a very thorough examination of my lungs. I certainly must have made great advances since I left England judging from the sounds his percussion produced.

With much love . . .

Ever yours very affectionately

AUBREY BEARDSLEY. . .

CXXIII.

(1897.)

(In pencil.)

Pavillion Louis XIV.,

S. Germain, 1st June.

MY DEAREST BROTHER

I had this morning such a bad attack of blood spitting. I had really hoped with all the care I

have been taking lately that the trouble might have been averted. Still I was not entirely surprised at the haemorrhage as my lungs have suffered a great deal from ominous crepitations the last two weeks. The bleeding has stopped this afternoon. Of course I feel perfectly wretched. . . .

With much love

Ever yours very affectionately

AUBREY BEARDSLEY.

CXXIV.

(June, 1897.)

Pavilion Louis XIV.,

S. Germain.

Friday.

MY DEAREST BROTHER

M.'s arrival this morning was such a great surprise & such a great pleasure for me. I think she looks wonderfully well considering all her voyaging; & not changed at all since I saw her last. Only occasional touches of an accent which I am sure she has acquired since she left America.

I hear you have Father G. staying with you. Your visit to the New Gallery must have been most charming & instructive. It was a delightful idea of Master Oswald to head his list of wants with the Ignatian motto. How does he prosper at St. ——, he is becoming I suppose quite a latinist.

He says that with care there is not the faintest doubt of my entire recovery. He raised his hands in horror when he was told that I had spent a year at Bournemouth. Nothing he exclaimed could have been much worse for my case, unless it had been the South of France.

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With much love

Ever yours very affectionately

AUBREY BEARDSLEY.

CXXIII.

(1897.)

(In pencil.)

Pavillion Louis XIV.,
S. Germain, 1st June.

MY DEAREST BROTHER

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have been taking lately that the trouble might have been averted. Still I was not entirely surprised at the haemorrhage as my lungs have suffered a great deal from ominous crepitations the last two weeks. The bleeding has stopped this afternoon. Of course I feel perfectly wretched. . . .

With much love

Ever yours very affectionately

AUBREY BEARDSLEY.

CXXIV.

(June, 1897.)

Pavilion Louis XIV.,

S. Germain.

Friday.

MY DEAREST BROTHER

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I am quite recovered from my attack, & really feel better now than I did before it occurred. I was living rather in dread of it for the last two or three weeks.

Yours with much love

Very affectionately,

AUBREY BEARDMORE.

CXXV.

(June, 1897.)

Pavillion Louis XIV.,

S. Germain.

Sunday.

MY DEAREST BROTHER

I wish I always felt as well as I do today. M. is quite amazed at my improvement. Dr. L. came to see me yesterday & found my tongue much better, so the painless operation is not to be performed. He says my crachement has relieved me very much & he was most pleased with my general condition. Father Henry had just been to confess me, & had been so kind & encouraging, so I had two different causes to make me full of hope & gratitude.

This morning I communicated with M. at the Chapelle of the Pensionnat S. Thomas. It is such a dear little church, & the Mass was sung by the Pensionnaires really very well. The sisters are quite charming & looked after us so kindly. You can imagine how happy the service made both of us. I shall always attend S. Thomas' Chapel in future. The aumonier seems very nice, I believe he is coming to see us. He preached a

short sermon this morning with a great deal of style & unction.

Whitsunday has filled the garden here with break-fasters, & the place looked so gay & pretty, the weather being quite adorable. I hardly ever go into the town but spend my time under the alleys, & amongst the rose trees of the Pavillion. It's so jolly having M. here. She has made great friends with the dear Père Henry.

With much love

Yours always very affectionately

AUBREY BEARDSLEY.

CXXVI.

(June, 1897.)

Pavillion Louis XIV.,

S. Germain.

Friday.

MY DEAREST BROTHER

I am just going to begin "Evan Harrington" & expect a great treat. Do you know the Mercure is going to publish a thing of Merediths—the Essay on Comedy—translated by Davray, who is meditating also a version of one of the novels.

I shall look forward very much to Z.'s story in the Revue Blanche. The weather is rather cold here just now, still I have not suffered, & am able to be out of doors quite a lot.

I am with much love

Always yours very affectionately

AUBREY BEARDSLEY.

[CXXVII.]

(1897.)

Pavillon Louis XIV.,
S. Germain, 12th June.

MY DEAR Z.

I have found that I sleep better between four & six in the morning than at any other time, so I have had to rearrange doctor L.'s programme. I found that rumours of my early walks had reached my barber this morning, & all present—including M. Bertrand, congratulated me warmly on having staid in bed. Doctor L. however, declares that my room is quite near enough to the forest to allow opened window to give me all the morning air I need.

When does the story appear in the *Revue Blanche*? I look forward to it with the greatest interest & am so curious to know what you have written that is going to shock me. Of course I should like, more than I can say, to do something for your *conte*, if you will allow me.

Paris is taking a long time to find its way to S. Germain, which leaves me the garden & sitting room to myself.

The forest too is quite my private territory.

So many thanks for your letter, with best love

Ever yours

AUBREY BEARDSLEY.

CXXVIII.

(1897.)

Pavillion Louis XIV.,
S. Germain, 13th June.

MY DEAREST BROTHER

This morning I was at the dear chapel of S. Thomas, & after I spent a pleasant retreat in the Forest. I hear that somewhere amongst the trees is the shrine of Notre Dame des Anglais. I mean to make a pilgrimage to it tomorrow.

Dr. L. came to see me yesterday & was most encouraging. He says my improvement in the week past is wonderful. My silly tongue however progresses not so well. I dread having it cauterised as that will put me upon uninteresting food for several days.

Father Henry paid us a little visit the same afternoon & gave us such an amusing account of the last suppression of the order in France, & the ruses to which they had recourse to keep themselves together. The dear Father seems to have been very hospitable just then, & to have invited whole houses of Jesuits to his bed & board as "friends".

With much love

ever yours very affectionately

AUBREY BEARDSLEY.

LAST LETTERS OF
CXXIX.

(1897.)

Pavillion Louis XIV.,
Rue de' Pontoise,
S Germain,
16th June.

MY DEAREST BROTHER

... A penitent of one of the Oratorians (Fr. P.) is staying here just now. The Penitent is a Spaniard & speaks with great enthusiasm of the Catholic Churches in London.

I am finding the forest a splendid umbrella in this hot weather. The page boy here carries my chair to some charming shady spot every morning & calls for me again at lunch time. Every one in the hôtel notices how much I have improved in the last few days. The B.'s I am sure look upon me as an utter fraud. How amusing the Fisher concert must have been; & Mrs. Bernard Beere reciting the Portrait!

Ever yours very affectionately

AUBREY BEARDSLEY.

CXXX.

(1897.)

Pavillion Louis XIV.,
S. Germain, 18th June.

MY DEAREST BROTHER

Such an unpleasant change in the weather. I wander about the house all day in an overcoat & still know that it is cold.

Were you at the Oratory yesterday? Do they not have a very beautiful service in their garden for Corpus Christi?

I have just taken my first lesson in German, & have mastered with great difficulty & repugnance the written German character.

The Professor is a recommendation of Mme. B. & comes three times a week for an hour. I long to struggle through a book, & have ordered a Werther in German & French. . . .

Ever yours very affectionately

AUBREY BEARDSLEY.

CXXXI.

(1897.)

Pavillon Louis XIV.,
S. Germain, 19th June.

MY DEAREST BROTHER

I hope this will reach you on the morning of the Feast of S. Aloysius, & I pray of you to remember me in your devotions to him.

Thank you so much for your kind letter. These fearful outbursts of bad weather have tired me very much; still I am well enough to have surprised Père Henry who has just been to see me, & who expected to find me seriously unwell after these violent storms.

We don't know of any English people at S. Germain. Dr. L. says that there used to be quite a large English colony here, but that it has now quite disappeared.

Paris sends me friends occasionally. On Thursday an

introduction of Will Rothenstein's lunched with us. He turned out to be pleasant & amusing; I wished he had been staying longer here. One certainly does feel rather isolated sometimes.

I find it very difficult to get books here, & one is not always able to give a sufficiently exact description of a book to write to Paris booksellers for it. I should be very grateful to you dear * * * if you could tell me of some good life or study of S. Mary Magdalen.

Le Père Henry has just spoken to me of one by Lacordaire, but does not know where I could get it. On Sunday the dear Father takes me to the Chapel of the Carmelite Convent, & will find for me some special prayers to S. M. M. You know the Carmelites have a great devotion for her.

With much love

Ever yours very affectionately

AUBREY BEARDSLEY.

CXXXII.

(June, 1897.)

Pavillon Louis XIV.,
S. Germain, 24th.

MY DEAREST BROTHER

Mother has been wanting to write to Dr. F for some time to ask him one or two questions about me, but I would not let her as I felt shy about worrying him. Also the very uncertain & variable condition of my health lately would make any report rather misleading. How-

ever it is (most kind of you) to suggest a letter to Dr. P., & we shall both feel it a great privilege to have his most valuable advice.

After all Père Henry was able to find me two or three very interesting lives of S. Mary Magdalen, one, rather short, by Lacordaire, another quite a big volume by the Jesuit Father Valmy. The Carmelite devotions I have not yet as they only exist here in handwriting.

A spell of such hot weather as we are having now should really nurse me into something less feeble & useless; anyhow fill me up a little.

How splendid the Nuntio's Mass must have [been]. I saw that Cardinal Vaughan was holding a reception. A great gathering I suppose of notable Catholics.

Good-bye dear * * *

Ever yours very affectionately

AUBREY BEARDSLEY.

CXXXIII.

(1897.)

Pavillon Louis XIV.,
S. Germain, 30th June.

MY DEAREST BROTHER

I had a letter from M. M. the other day telling me that he & his mother were staying in Paris. They will be lunching with us tomorrow & I look forward very much to their visit. The great heat here has turned to storms. Last night we had a succession of them. My nights trouble me dreadfully nowadays.

The German goes on slowly. The grammar is quite inaccessible, however I begin to read a little.

Carmel has sent me some beautiful devotions through le Pere Henry, who comes in often to see me & cheers me so much.

With much love

Ever yours very affectionately

AUBREY BEARDSLEY.

CXXXIV.

(1897.)

Pavillon Louis XIV.,
S. Germain, 30th June.

MY DEAREST BROTHER

A line in haste. I cannot help feeling that a letter of mother's to Dr. P. & one of mine to yourself (posted on Thursday evening) have miscarried in the post.

M. wires to us this afternoon that Dr. P. has *not* received his. It would be so good of you dear * * * to wire if there has been any mistake.

Very affectionately yours

AUBREY BEARDSLEY.

CXXXV.

(1897.)

Pavillon Louis XIV.,
S. Germain, 2nd July.

MY DEAREST BROTHER

I will take Dr. ---'s advice at once. This afternoon we go into Paris, & tomorrow morning will see Dr. ---. I feel nervous about making the journey twice in a

one day, I will let you know what he says at once. Your idea of a little change at the sea is quite charming. I seem to feel the want of a bracing air. What a nuisance about Dr. P. I was quite upset about it. Mother wrote again yesterday, & I pray that the postal fates have been more kind this time.

How interesting your day must have been at Netley; I never imagined that it was near Southampton. Surely you must have been dreadfully tired.

After all the Ms. could not lunch on Wednesday. We may see them this afternoon. Mrs. M. wrote to me that they thought of spending a few days *here* next week, & I am hoping that they will stop at *this* Pavillon.

Yesterday I saw le Père Coubé. He is going to send me a copy of one of his sermons. He asked much after you. . . .

How good you are to me dear * * *, a brother in fact out of a fairy tale. I really feel more anxious to get well for your sake than for my own.

Good bye

With very much love

Ever yours very affectionately

AUBREY BEARDSLEY.

CXXXVI.

(1897.)

Pavillon Louis XIV.,
S. Germain, 6th July.

MY DEAREST BROTHER

Mother saw Dr. —— again on Sunday, & he reassured her once more as to my chances of improve-

ment in good climates. As to our imminent ~~move~~ he gave us a great choice of places. Havre, Trouville & Dieppe seemed to be the most suitable. There is something in favour of each.

On the whole perhaps Dieppe would be the wisest choice, as it is not *too* fashionable, & I know from experience that it is amusing & inexpensive. I am a little frightened of Trouville.

The Ms. come to stay here on Wednesday.

With much love

Ever yours very affectionately

AUBREY BEARDSLEY.

CXXXVII.

(1897.)

Normandy Hotel,
Paris, 4th July, 1897.

MY DEAREST BROTHER

Dr. —— has just been to see me & has made a very prolonged examination of my lungs. He finds the right in very fair working order, but the left has consolidated generally. He took much the same view of my case as Dr. P., but of course as this is the first time he has seen me he could not tell me whether I am better or worse than I was when I first came to France. As we thought my liver has been a great deal the cause of my weakness & depression. It is considerably enlarged. Dr. —— thinks that I should be in a more bracing air so that I could take plenty of exercise, without being fatigued, & suggests Trouville as being the nearest & best place.

for the purpose. We had suggested Boulogne but he thought it unsuitable, & with regard to Dinard & places in that part of the coast he said they would be too exposed for me. We discussed a little about winter resorts. He does not advise mountain districts, but says that Egypt could not fail to be of the very greatest advantage to me. What do you think of Trouville? I see it is near Havre, & I have just got a little guide book which tells me that we shall be able to find moderate hotels.

Yesterday we went to see the Ms. They are such charming people. They are coming to see us today & will perhaps go back to S. Germain with us tomorrow. I think they are coming to spend a few days at the Pavillon Louis XIV. I shall be so glad to see more of Master M. M. I suppose you know that Mrs. M. is also a Catholic. I assisted at a very beautifully sung Mass at S. Roch this morning.

With much love

Ever yours very affectionately

AUBREY BEARDSLEY.

CXXXVIII.

(1897.)

Hotel Sandwich,
Rue Halle au Blé,
Dieppe, 12th July.

MY DEAREST BROTHER

We had such dreadful difficulty in coming here by the train of our choice. We had chosen the 10

o'clk. from S. Lazare, but had no sooner put oyr hand bags in our carriage than we were told by the Chef de la Gare that we could not possibly be allowed to travel by that train as we were not going to London. It was only about a minute before the train started that we prevailed on the authorities to break the rule in our favour. Even then we had to leave all the serious luggage behind us at Paris to be sent on by a later train.

There was quite a scene about it all, but as the next trains to Dieppe took nearly seven hours to arrive we stuck to our decision with overwhelming obstinacy. I stood the journey wonderfully well. I am so thankful that we found splendid weather here to greet us. Today again the sun is all powerful & there is such a lovely fresh breeze.

The Ms. came down to S. Germain on Wednesday. They were enchanted with the place & will be staying there some little time. It was so pleasant for us to have them staying at our Pavillion. They are such charming people. I was very glad to see more of M. M., he is a really nice fellow.

I am looking rather ill nowadays, but am feeling rather better just now than I have been for some time.

With much love

Ever yours very affectionately

AUBREY BEARDSLEY.

CXXXIX.

(July, 1897.)

Hotel Sandwich,
Rue Halle au Blé,
Dieppe.

MY DEAREST BROTHER

I hurried away from Paris this time as the weather was so hot & oppressive. Here we are having splendid luck, gentle winds and a constant sun. I get out about half past eight & have my little breakfast at the Café. It is such a luxury to get the morning air, & quite a new one for me nowadays. In the afternoon I stay at home, & read & write & rest. My room here is really a fine one, the largest I think I have ever slept in, & it makes also a very pleasant sitting room. I find myself leading almost precisely the same life as I did here two years back, doing the same things at the same times; so the past keeps me a sort of cheerful company.

Dear old Father ----! I know he is amusing. Mrs. D. had a great deal to tell me about him.

I and Mother were so grieved to say goodbye to Père Henri. You can't think how perfectly sweet & kind he was all the time we were at S. Germain.

T.'s attempted suicide must make a stirring group.¹

With much love

Always yours very affectionately

AUBREY BEARDSLEY.

I wonder if you could tell me where I could find some good study of Wolfram von Eschenbach's work.

¹ An episode in a play.

CXL.

(July, 1897.)

Hotel Sandwich,
Dieppe.
Wednesday.

MY DEAREST BROTHER

The wire to the Normandy never reached us, as we were staying at the Terminus Hôtel (on account of its nearness to S. Lazare).

The weather seems to set fair here, & I ought to, prosper. I am beginning to take a tonic Dr. P. has prescribed, and I am sure it is going to do me [a] great deal of good. I am so grateful for his advice, and the wonderfully kind interest he has taken in my case.

The Proprietress has just been up to ask Mother to decipher a letter in English which the old lady supposed must be an enquiry for rooms at the Hôtel. We were amused to find that the letter was one of M.'s for us, but oddly enough the name on the envelope spelt "Windling" quite as well as "Beardsley". Our landlady has left the letter with us, with apologies for having opened it, but with ill disguised doubts as to our right to possess it. . . .

Always your very affectionate

AUBREY BEARDSLEY

CXLI.

(July, 1897.)

Hotel Sandwich,
Dieppe.
Monday.

MY DEAREST BROTHER

I received your very kind & sympathetic letter yesterday, & had begun to acknowledge it immediately, when I was carried off by a sudden invitation to the Saint Saëns Festival here & a dinner at Fritz Thaulows, so had not a moment. . . .

I dare not say much of my improvement in health at Dieppe, for my returns to strength, alas, seem too often to be only the preludes to fresh troubles. Still last night I could not help being hopeful as well as grateful for the really wonderful way in which I had borne a very tiring day that might well have fatigued much stronger people than myself. It was past eleven when I left Thaulow's. I came home on foot (about 10 minutes walk) & afterwards slept soundly & without any discomfort. Today too I am feeling well.

Father Henry anticipated that I might find some difficulty in choosing a director here, & gave me a word of warning at the same time. Jesuits come here occasionally to preach but there are none in residence. The other orders are also unrepresented. For the moment l'Abbé — of S. Remy will be the successor of the good Père Henry.

In a week or ten days I am going to visit a scholastic

house near Dieppe, the aumonier of which I have heard is a most saintly & beautiful character. The school is kept by a layman to whom I am to have an introduction quite soon. From all I have been told I hope to find at the "school" some very sympathetic friends, a devout counsellor, & a place of retreat. I will tell you a lot more about this soon.

The constant presence of the Blessed Sacrament in the church is indeed the greatest of all privileges, & even the least advanced in the spiritual life find in their devotions before the Blessed Sacrament an extraordinary joy & comfort.

Good bye dear * * *, & with the greatest love.

Yours always most affectionately

AUBREY BEARDSLEY.

CXLII.

(1897.)

Hôtel Sandwich,
Dieppe, 22nd July.

MY DEAREST BROTHER

I was so delighted to hear from M. this morning that all has gone very well with her at the Criterion. I do hope that the piece will have a good run. . . .

I am grateful to say that I still walk & sleep very well & am beginning to eat better. The weather has not been however lately all that is best for me. I think I am likely to be alone here for a few days as Mother may

have to pay a visit to England. . . . Père Henry wrote to us today, he was wondering what had become of the Ms., I suppose they left S. Germain almost immediately after us.

With much love

Ever your very affectionate

AUBREY BEARDSLEY. . . .

CXLIII.

(1897.)

Hôtel Sandwich,
Dieppe, July 26th.

MY DEAREST BROTHER

Mother will not be leaving me unless the call to Brighton is *very* urgent. Of course I should be a little nervous by myself, though I am grateful to say just now I feel no cause to be apprehensive. My first confession to —— has made me regret more than ever the loss of Père Henry's kindness & beautiful advice. The two churches here S. Remy & S. Jacques are magnificent to look at. . . .

It is just possible I may be leaving this hôtel at once. I will wire you immediately any change of address. Some rather unpleasant people come here. For other reasons too I fear some undesirable complications may arise if I stay. However I am still uncertain.

Mother has just returned from a search for new quarters, & I am going round with her in a moment to see some rooms which she has looked at & finds prettily situated

& comfortable. The Hôtels have let all their best places by now, so the move has been made a little difficult. Good bye dear * * *, with the greatest affection.

AUBREY BEARDSLEY.

CXLIV.

(August, 1897.)

Hotel Sandwich,
Dieppe.
Friday.

MY DEAREST BROTHER

As you will see our attempts at a removal have proved fruitless. Mother is leaving for London by the afternoon boat today. I shall not be left quite alone, as Mrs. S. is staying in the Hôtel & will be able to look after me if I fall ill. The weather is gradually improving, & I don't fear any immediate disaster.

What a charming photograph Y. Z. sent me; please tell him that I am writing to him.

Mother will call on Doctor P. if he is still in town. She is writing to you.

Ever most affectionately

AUBREY BEARDSLEY.

CXLV.

(1897.)

Hôtel Sandwich,
Dieppe, August 2nd.

MY DEAREST BROTHER

I am really getting much stronger & am in perfectly good spirits. I am able to work too, & that

keeps me employed the 'best part of the day. Some agreeable friends are staying here so I am not without company. The unpleasant people come & go.

I should much like M. to come over when she has time to spare. Still I am afraid she would get dreadfully bored with me & my ways. Dear Mother I know has been ~~badly~~ tried these last few months. But M. will tell you how impossible I am to get on with. And what can you think of me with all my constant grumblings & changes of mind.

I was expecting a letter from Mother by this morning's post but none has arrived. I had a wire from her on Saturday. I think she must have seen Dr. P. The weather here is not brilliant just now, but still quite possible for me.

Very affectionately

AUBREY BEARDSLEY.

CXLVI.

(August, 1897.)

Sandwich Hotel,
Dieppe.
Wednesday.

MY DEAREST BROTHER

I am so unhappy to have had no letter from you. I do hope you are quite well. I have begun such a number of letters to you since I wrote last, but strove in vain to make anything more than two or three lines out of my uneventful life. I have enjoyed a wonderful

stretch of good health, wonderful enough to make me tremble at moments. Sudden changes in the weather I notice much less than formerly.

I think mother will be coming back tomorrow, & M. speaks of the chance of her being able to cross over on Sunday week. It will be a great pleasure for me to see her again. They both tell me that London has been the most horrid place imaginable these last few weeks. I wish M. could have spent the rest of the summer with me here. She must want a really good holiday.

Do you know Vincent O'Sullivan, a young Catholic writer? He is staying here just now.

Ever very affectionately

AUBREY BEARDSLEY.

CXLVII.

(15th August, 1897.)

Sandwich Hôtel,
Dieppe.

MY DEAREST BROTHER

I was so interested in the criticism of the Journal of Mental Science.

Mother came back on Thursday. We spend a great deal of time discussing our winter quarters in Paris. I am all impatience to get there. We have heard of a good hotel in the Avenue d'Antin. However mother will go to Paris first & make arrangements.

I expect M. will spend a week with us soon. The dear child seems to be tired dreadfully with rehearsals. I do hope she is looking well.

Mass was beautiful this morning at S. Remy. My first celebration of the feast of the Assumption.

Monday.

I have just had a line from Dr. P., he tells me that he is going to spend some of his holidays here.

You must not think dear * * * of writing to me when you are tired. I feel so ashamed of myself for having begun my last letter to you so importunately & ungratefully. What could you have thought of me. Do forgive me. You must never trouble either to write me long letters, just a line from you sometimes will always give me so much pleasure & encouragement.

With the greatest affection

AUBREY BEARDSLEY.

[CXLVIII.]

(23rd August, 1897.)

Sandwich Hotel,
Rue Halle au Blé.

Dieppe.
Monday.

MY DEAR Z.

The photographs you have sent me are perfectly charming: So very many thanks for them. A small vague one of M. wandering among the trees is

surely quite the prettiest thing the camera has ever done. Your mounts are most successful.

I think I have got a good deal stronger since I have been in Dieppe, in spite of bad weather too. For the last week or so the rain has been pitiless. However it has kept the town delightfully empty.

I am wondering if you are likely to find yourself at the British Museum sometime soon. If you do it would be so very kind of you to make a reference for me in the library. The book I should like to have a slight description of is Guiffrey's "Les Coffieri" (Morgand & Fatout, Paris, 1877). I have tried to get it here but Morgand tells me it is out of print, & that I should have great difficulty in finding a copy. Please don't make a journey to the Museum unless you are on a voyage of discovery on your own account.

Always yours

AUBREY BEARDSLEY.

CXLIX.

(August or September, 1897.)

Sandwich Hotel,
Dieppe.
Wednesday.

MY DEAREST BROTHER

I am overjoyed that you think Paris a satisfactory winter city. I am more pleased with the plan than I can say. I have written a little note to Dr.

I sleep well & eat *very* well.

We too have been having splendid weather, & mosquitos. The wind is from the south, & with the sun has silenced my creaking lung.

How delightful the Thames & its banks must be if you are sharing this warmth. I hear of a wonderful life of A. C. that has just been published, called I believe John Johns. Have you read it?

Again many thanks for your letter which has cheered me very much.

~~Very~~ I feel much more happy now than I did a little time ago.

With greatest love

Ever most affectionately

AUBREY BEARDSLEY.

CL.

(September, 1897.)

Sandwich Hôtel,
Dieppe.
Monday.

MY DEAREST BROTHER

I keep wonderfully well considering the terribly rainy weather we have been having. When is the pilgrimage to Belgium likely to be made? Your letter seems to promise a chance of our meeting. I do hope the promise may be fulfilled soon.

I was so amused at all I heard about the Hall Caine criticisms. After all this he ought to be called the Maxman.

~~I have~~ hopes—faint ones—that September may turn out clement.

I suppose you will be at — till the end of it. We have just arranged to change our hotel. Our new address is Hotel des Etrangers, Rue d'Aguado.

It is such a charming hotel beautifully sheltered from the wind. I have got a very good room there. . . .

Ever yours very affectionately

AUBREY BEARDSLEY.

CLI.

(September, 1897.)

Hotel des Etrangers,
Rue d'Aguado,
Dieppe.

MY DEAREST BROTHER

We moved in here quite successfully this morning. . . . The people staying here are many of them rather charming.

There is a very nice covered terrace to the Hôtel so I am able to sit out of doors the best part of the day.

Always your very affectionate

AUBREY BEARDSLEY.

CLII.

(September, 1897.)

Hôtel des Etrangers,
Rue d'Aguado,
Dieppe.
Tuesday.

MY DEAREST BROTHER

Everyone tells me that I am looking much stronger since I came here & I feel better myself. M.

visit has cheered me very much, & I think too she has enjoyed her little visit to Dieppe.

The weather has been tolerably good. Today however is very rough, & is making a havoc of the tri-coloured flags hung over the hotel gates in honour of the new alliance.

I am beginning to add to my food with cod liver oil, & am thankful to say that I am able to take it. If I can only manage to continue with it regularly I feel sure it will do great things for me.

How long will you stay at — —? You will be sad I am sure to leave such a beautiful garden, that makes such delicate & tender backgrounds in a camera's pictures. Every one here has been enchanted with Z.'s photographs. Would you please tell him that the book I asked him to look at for me at the British Museum has unexpectedly been sent me.

With much love

Your most affectionate

AUBREY BEARDSLEY.

CLIII.

(September, 1897.)

Hotel des Etrangers,
Dieppe.
Tuesday.

MY DEAREST BROTHER

We have had such a spell of rainy weather & were prepared to make a flight to Paris if it continued.

Today however has wrought a splendid change, & we have stayed our packing. I stood the cold damp weather quite wonderfully.

Dr. V. who has been staying in this hôtel recommends Paris very warmly for at least the first half of the winter. He thinks diet even more important for me than climate. He will see me as soon as I arrive in Paris & make a thorough examination of me. He spoke very hopefully of such cases as mine.

Everyone has been very charming to me here. . . . I have made famous progress since I have been at the Etrangers. This afternoon's boat brought over Dr. P. He thought me looking quite another person.

With much love

Always your very affectionate

AUBREY BEARDSLEY.

CLIV.

(September, 1897.)

Hotel des Etrangers,
Dieppe.
Thursday.

MY DEAREST BROTHER

Dr. P. has just put me through a very careful examination. He thinks I have made quite a marvellous improvement since he saw me at the Windsor Hotel, & that if I continue to take care I shall get quite well & have a new life before me. He is certain that

Paris is the best place for me for the autumn & at least the early winter.

I cannot tell you what great joy it gives me to be able to send you this good report. I wish I could see you soon. . . . Are you likely to be in Paris this autumn.

We leave here on next Tuesday & I think we may stay at Foyot's Hotel -at the corner of the Rue Tournon & the Rue Vaugirard. Its rather a nice situation & I shall be able to get a room facing South. What a relief it is to feel I shall not have a long journey to make.

• I am quite sorry to leave Dieppe it is such a charming little place.

Good bye dear * * *

With much love

Always your very affectionate

AUBREY BEARDSLEY.

CLV.

(September, 1897.)

Hotel Foyot,
Rue Tournon,
Paris.
Wednesday.

MY DEAREST BROTHER

So many thanks for your very kind letter so full of encouragement. We arrived in Paris yesterday evening. I have got such a charming room at this hôtel, facing south & the Luxembourg Gardens. Paris is so

charming just at this moment & is quite the best place for me. I shed however bitter invisible tears on leaving Dieppe. I had so many nice friends there & amusing acquaintances. Particularly a very charming catholic family, relations of Bishop C.'s. They live in Paris so I hope I shall see a good deal of them.

I cannot help feeling in good spirits today & pleased that the move here has tired me so very little.

I shall see Dr. V. in a few days when I have settled down.

I hardly like to think now of all the thin ice I must have skated over since March 31st¹—a miraculous patinage!

Good bye dear * * *, most kind & most patient of brothers.

With much love

Ever very affectionately

AUBREY BEARDSLEY.

CLVI.

(September, 1897.)

Hôtel Foyot,
Rue Tournoa,
Paris.
Saturday.

MY DEAREST BROTHER

I have felt rather the change from sea air, with the result that I am suffering from a slight cold that

¹ See No. XCIII.

keeps me to my room. I had just the same trouble at the Voltaire.

I shall be so glad to see Père Coubé again & shall make my confession to him next week. I hope that Thursday will see you back in town wonderfully refreshed & strengthened after your holiday. As for me I am trying to think of the winter as bravely as possible & encourage myself with the recital of "if winter come can spring be far behind". I count on a glowing October.

It is a great thing to be in this quarter of Paris, all one wants is just round one, also it seems to me to be a few degrees warmer than nearer the river. . . .

Good bye my dear Brother.

With much love

Ever your most affectionate

AUBREY BEARDSLEY.

CLVII.

(1897.)

Hôtel Foyot,
Rue Tournon,
Paris, Sept. 27th.

MY DEAREST BROTHER

I have been suffering so from neuralgia for the last few days that I have felt quite incapable. Dr. V. came to see me on Thursday & found that my trouble was in a very advanced stage, but still quite curable.

I may not only have several years of life before me, but perhaps even a long life.

The wretched chill I caught when I arrived here, has not quite left me yet. Even these last few scorching days have not set me right.

I wish I had felt better to enjoy this perfectly marvellous summer weather. I thought of you much on Thursday, leaving your pleasant retreat.

I paid a visit to the Rue de Sèvres & found that Father Coubé was out of town till the end of this month. I will write him a little note on Thursday.

An artist who is building a grand new house at B. asked me to pay a visit to it & tell him what I think of a certain yellow paint he has used for decorating his salon. If I dislike it I am to write to him at once & tell him so. He will then journey to Paris & make some change in the colour. If I like it the yellow is to stay. I dislike the decoration very much.

But what am I to do?

If I bring him up all the way to Paris & he is after all satisfied with the work he will grumble at the trouble I have given him. If I say nothing he will blame me no doubt in the long run as he is sure at some time or other to dislike the yellow of his choice.

With much love

Ever yours very affectionately

AUBREY BEARDSLEY.

CLVIII.

(1897.)

Hôtel Foyot,
Rue Tournon,
Paris, Oct. 1st.

MY DEAREST BROTHER

Yes I am doing my best to get better & stronger, & am of course following Dr. V.'s advice. His medicines are suiting me very well. My obstinate cold has at last left me. We have been having such fine weather, & I am able to be out of doors a great deal. I suppose ----'s remark about freedom in Russia was intended for a joke.

I am dear Brother

Your very affectionate

AUBREY BEARDSLEY.

CLIX.

(1897.)

Hôtel Foyot,
Rue Tournon,
Paris, Oct. 31d.

MY DEAREST BROTHER

. . . The Hotel is in connection with Foyot's restaurant & visitors to the hotel get the benefit of a splendid cooking for very reduced rates. The food itself is so good as well as the way it is cooked & I am sure I am profiting greatly by the excellence of the "beef".

Dr. V. has ordered me to take a turpentine "bath" night & morning. I have come out in a magnificent rash, but still am greatly comforted. The weather keeps

very fine on the whole; & as long as the winds dont blow too roughly, I dont think I shall suffer from cold.

Vincent O'Sullivan has been staying in Paris a few days. I always like to see him as he is one of the few Catholic friends I have, & is admirably read in Theological literature. He was talking very interestingly last time on the works of St. Theresa. He has just had a story accepted by the Mercure de France.

I wondered whose life it was of Peter the Great you were reading? I have just finished that great & appalling work "The Memoirs of Casanova".

Yours always most affectionately

AUBREY BEARDSLEY.

CLX.

(October, 1897.)

Hotel Foyot,
Rue Tournon,
Paris.
Tuesday.

MY DEAREST BROTHER

My neuralgia has scarcely troubled me at all lately, & I am waiting for a letter from my English Dentist before I venture to place myself at the mercies of a stranger. The weather gives me continued cause for gratitude. Père Coubé thought I was looking much better & stronger than when he saw me last. He has just returned from Biarritz & advises me very warmly to go there if I have to leave Paris. He says it is so amusing & invigorating. I saw the dear Father at the

Rue de Sèvres again this afternoon. He was so kind & encouraging. He asked often after you & Y. Z. & sent remembrances.

The drawings of classic cities have not been engraved yet. A photogravure has been made of Carthage, but does not satisfy the artist.

I shall try to be at S. Sulpice next Sunday. Cardinal Vaughan seems to have made a great impression at Arles.

• Vincent O'Sullivan left Paris a few days ago. I dont see many people. I am so frightened of getting over tired.

• My reading has come to a stand still. I wish you could tell me of some happy & inspiring book.

With much love

Always very affectionately

AUBREY BEARDSLEY.

[CLXI.]

(27th October, 1897.)

Hotel Foyot,
Rue de Tournon,
Paris.

MY DEAR Z.

This reproduction from the Pope's presentation album has just appeared in a French Paper. I thought perhaps you might not have seen it.

Always yours

AUBREY BEARDSLEY.

LAST LETTERS OF
CLXII.

Hôtel Foyot,
Rue de Tournon,
Paris.
Thursday.

MY DEAREST BROTHER

I saw Dr. V. today who found a slight improvement in me. I spoke to him about Biarritz. He thought it might be a good place but that I should run the risk there of suffering from Atlantic gales later in the winter.

We have had the most astonishing weather here, but today alas, there is a change—a sharp cold wind that has tried me a little.

I was at St. Sulpice on Sunday. The church was crowded. Cardinal Vaughan was the celebrant. He looked magnificent & was admired greatly by everybody. I noticed Father —— was in his suite.

I heard nothing of his sermon in French. Was it ever preached?

I amuse myself most with picture books nowadays. A German firm have been publishing such wonderful little illustrated biographies of artists, a most valuable series. Their Mantegna is so good. I mean to spend some afternoons next week at the Calcographical department of the Louvre. I am told they have a very large collection of engravings there for sale at a few francs a piece. Do you want some Saint Sebastians?

I am so glad that M. is looking well.

My nights are quite good now, & my appetite never fails me.

Yours very affectionately

AUBREY BEARDSLEY.

CLXIII.

(1897.)

Hôtel Foyot,
Rue de Tournon,
Paris, Oct. 31st.

MY DEAREST BROTHER

I have been so worried & upset this last week that I have not been able to write. If there had not been such splendid weather in my favour I should have really got terribly depressed. My room is littered with guide books to Mentone, Cannes, Biarritz, etc., etc. We have been hearing very good things of Biarritz. Dr. V. speaks well of it & I have heard of a good & cheap hotel there. Did you not stay once at Arcachon? Though if I recollect rightly it was in the summer. I wish you would advise me about the place. I know consumptives go there in the winter. It seems that the changes in temperature & weather are less frequent & less sudden than in the Riviera. Still I suppose in the south of France one would get more sun. I dread repeating the grey skies of Bournemouth.

Every fresh person one meets has fresh places to suggest & fresh objections to the places we have already

thought of. Yet I dare not linger late in Paris; but what a pity that I have to leave!

Mother has just had given her a bottle of water from Lourdes for me from the sisters of the Sacré Cœur. They were so sweet & kind.

How are you in London? I hear of bad fogst & am all gratitude as I sun myself in the streets here. I keep wonderfully well & at times dont look ill at all. Everyone has noticed my improvement. Yet all the same I get dreadfully nervous, & stupidly worried about little things.

Will you please tell Y. Z. that the St. Sebastian I sent him is from a fresco by Pinturicchio in the newly opened Borgia apartments at the Vatican. I believe the frescoes have not been seen since the time of Alexander VI. The present pope had an album of photogravures made from them & sent presentation copies to most of the crowned heads & chefs d'Etat in the world.

Last week Mgr. Clari brought Feliz Faure his copy.

With much love

Always yours very affectionately

AUBREY BEARDSLEY.

CLXIV.

(1st November; 1897.)

Hotel Foyat,
Rue de Tournon.

MY DEAREST BROTHER

We shall descend, at Mentone & stay there unless we find Bordighera very tempting indeed. Thurs-

day next is out day of departure. In the meantime Paris is as warm as in June, perfectly bewildering weather. However ~~fine~~ weather is as necessary for travelling (in my state) as a railway ticket. I should dread a night journey in the cold.

W^E had very chilly weather & a little fog here about a week ago & I suffered a good deal.

My nights are quite undisturbed now. I am so ashamed of myself for grumbling so much. In so many ways I am better & stronger than I have ever been since my school days.

Thank you more than I can say for what you wrote to me about prayers for health.

I have just been interrupted in the middle of this by the visit of M. Saunier who has quite lost his heart to London.

With much love

Always yours very affectionately

AUBREY BEARDSLEY.

CLXV.

(1897.)

Hotel Foyot,
Rue de Tournon,
Paris, Nov. 2nd.

MY DEAREST BROTHER

Mother saw Dr. V. yesterday. He is in no hurry for me to leave Paris so long as this wonderful weather lasts, & says the South of France is not fit for me

just yet. I am so grateful to you for your advice about Arcachon. I must confess I was a little frightened by the Bournemouthy pictures of the place in the guide book.

All Saints day was brilliant here, such crowds in the Churches.

With much love

Yours always very affectionately

AUBREY BEARDSLEY.

CLXVI.

(November, 1897.)

Hôtel Fayot,
Thursday.

MY DEAREST BROTHER

At the last moment Dr. V. has forbidden me to make the journey at night & moreover insists on my breaking the journey at Marseilles. So we had to return our Wagon lits, & put off the departure till tomorrow morning. It is quite cold & foggy again here, & I get very good accounts of the weather in the south. If I dont take a decided turn for the better now I shall go down hill rather quickly.

I had quite sad news from Père Coubé yesterday, it was of the death of dear old Père Henry. He died in Paris very peacefully. I dont think you ever saw him. He was so kindly & so saintly.

With much love

Always yours very affectionately

AUBREY BEARDSLEY.

CLXVII.

(November, 1897.)

Hôtel Cosmopolitain,
Menton. •
Monday.

MY DEAREST BROTHER

I was very tired after the journey & did not seem able to write at all. We are staying here as I feel sure the place will suit me. The air is lovely & there is so much sun. I do hope I may get a little better.

To day I saw the town, it is pretty & not at all dull. I have had no more haemorrhage & think I shall avoid it if I take care.

Please forgive a very short letter, I shall look forward to hearing from you.

With much love

Yours very affectionately

AUBREY BEARDSLEY.

CLXVIII.

(1897.)

Hôtel Cosmopolitain,
Menton, Nov. 29th.

MY DEAREST BROTHER

I have quite recovered from my fatigue, & am prospering in this wonderful sunshine. I can't tell how grateful I feel to have got better again. The pains in my lungs have left me & my cough is much less troublesome. I sleep without any distress & eat quite heartily.

Even in this short time the people here have noticed an improvement in me.

I am able to be out almost all day, & there are such beautifully sheltered spots in the grounds of this hotel where I can sit all the morning if I am too tired to get down to the sea.

The little town here is so gay & amusing.

There are several churches. The old Cathedral of S. Michel, the Penitents Blancs & Penitents noirs & quite near me a little chapel which I shall always attend. Père Calixte is in charge of it. He seems very kind & serious. I shall make my confessions to him. You would like the chapel so much, it is dedicated to S. Roch. The quête is made in a shell.

I am much happier & more peaceful than when I wrote to you last. I do hope I shall be able to send you more & more satisfactory accounts of myself.

The mistral has not blown yet.

With much love

Always your very affectionate

AUBREY BEARDSLEY.

CLXIX.

(1897.)

Hôtel Cosmopolitain,
Menton, Decr. 6th.

MY DEAREST BROTHER

Menton suits me splendidly. Our hotel stands high, so I have the benefit of mountain air as well as sea, a very improving combination.

I am gradually throwing off my languor & depression, & am particularly grateful to be less troubled with the latter as depression seems to unfit me more for resistance to all sorts of temptations than even thoughtlessness or positive weakness.

I have just been reading a Port Royalist version of Saint Augustin's Confessions. I am quite astonished at what he says about beauty & the use of the eyes.

With much love

Always your most affectionate

AUBREY BEARDSLEY.

CLXX.

(1897.)

Hôtel Cosmopolitan,
Menton, Decr. 13th.

MY DEAREST BROTHER

Winter is wonderful down here we have not had a single cold day since we arrived. Only for a couple of hours or so at sundown do I have to close my windows. What a splendid salesman you must be or what a ~~cunning~~ purchaser to get rid of any book with so small a loss. I should probably have got shillings instead of pounds for the Behmen.

Do you know anything of a German novelist named Ludwig Habicht. He has been staying at this hotel. . . . This week I am sorry to say he has gone away also some other ~~very~~ charming people, Americans, have left. I am hoping that Christmas will bring me some more companionable folk.

Every one in Mentone is on a bicycle & bursting with health. I believe I am the only invalid in the place.

My other grievance is mosquitos. They have attacked me atrociously. So many thanks for your kind letter. How interesting Ward's book must be.

With much love

Always your very affectionate

AUBREY BEARDSLEY.

[CLXXI.]

(1897.)

Hotel Cosmopolitan,
Menton, Dec. 22nd.

MY DEAR Z.

I must write you a few lines to send you my best wishes for Christmas.

Contrary to all my expectations I have found Mentone a charming place, & it was a most good Providence that led us to this particular hotel. It is well out of the town & on the hill, but with my renewed vigour the ascent gives me very little trouble. I had run down terribly before I came here & was quite shattered by the journey. I shall be curious to see how I progress in the wonderfully favourable conditions that Mentone affords. I am at this moment feeling about as well as I did before Dr. P. saw me at Dieppe. A gradual improvement however slight will encourage me a good deal. I was weighed at a medical institute here at the beginning of the month & await nervously the verdict of the bascule on Jany 2nd.

The terrible accuracy of this machine will not leave me in any charming doubts such as the penny in the slot ones might allow. I shall know my loss to a gramme.

My mother joins me in kindest regards & sends you her best wishes for Christmas.

Always yours

AUBREY BEARDSLEY.

CLXXII.

(1897.)

Hôtel Cosmopolitain,
Menton, Dec. 23rd.

MY DEAREST BROTHER

How much I shall think of you this Christmas & how gratefully. But my gratitude can never equal your goodness & kindness. M. tells me that she will be with you on Christmas evening; I am so glad for I shall feel that her presence gives me a sort of place amongst you on Saturday.

I do hope the most encouraging of all the Feasts will bring you the fullest joy & happiness.

With the utmost affection

AUBREY BEARDSLEY.

CLXXIII.

(1897.)

Hôtel Cosmopolitain,
Menton, Decr. 30th.

MY DEAREST BROTHER

Among many things your goodness has taught me is a greater care & wisdom in the spend-

ing of money. How hot my face gets when I think how wildly & uselessly one scattered one's money once. I am glad to say life is comparatively cheap here, much cheaper for instance than at such a place as Dieppe.

I am delighted at your success with the works of [J. A.] Symonds. There is much to be said for a writer who may be sold profitably at second hand.

Yes there is a library here but not a very good one. However I belong to it as I found a dozen books or so on the catalogue that I was anxious to read, & were worth the expenditure of six francs.

Oh how good of you to think of sending me some scraps from Archbishop Ullathornes life, but have you really the time to copy them out! For the last twenty four hours we have had a pitiless drench of rain, & the Mentonese are rejoicing for the sake of their oranges & lemons. But I am grumbling dreadfully at being kept indoors.

With the greatest affection, & gratitude for your brotherly care & love.

AUBREY BEARDSLEY.

CLXXIV.

(1897.)

Hôtel Cosmopolitain,
Menton, Jan. 11th.

MY DEAREST BROTHER

Thank you so much for your kind letter. Yes I am in a land of sunshine again, & the spell of wet

weather does not seem to have done me the least hurt. Menton is a truly sociable little place, & the strong English contingent here furnishes me with quite a number of people to talk to. There is a famous egyptologist here who looks like a corpse, has looked like one for fourteen years, who is much worse than I am, & yet lives on & does things. My spirits have gone up immensely since I have known him.

Both the Priests who visit me here have been invalids like myself & are so kind & sympathetic. Neither of them are French. The Abbé Luzzani is German & Italian, & Father Orchmans is Belge. The curé of Menton is an old dear but I see very little of him.

Your year's waiting will surely be attended with the greatest graces, as are even the least acts of obedience.

With our best love to all

Yours always most affectionately

AUBREY BEARDSLEY.

CLXXV.

(1898.)

Hôtel Cosmopolitan,
Menton, Jany. 24th.

MY DEAREST BROTHER

I was so glad to get your letter which I would have answered before, but I have had to rest my arm a little owing to rather a painful attack of rheumatism. We have just got over some very treacherous weather, made up of a cold north east wind & a really summer

sun. All that though has given way at last to a delicious spring mildness. You would be delighted with the flowering shrubs here; & trees like the mimosa literally sing with bees.

To day Father Orchmans who was lunching with us told me that Monsieur de C. is now a Vicaire. He was so interested to hear that I had met him, & that I knew Father Coubé.

I have found the Egyptologist an amusing person. This morning he gave me such an interesting account of a convent of ---- at ----. He has introduced a number of pupils to their school most of whom have ended by becoming nuns.

He is himself a quaker, but I am sure will be drawn to the Church sooner or later.

I was so glad to hear of R. being so devoted.

No I have never heard of the preservative girdles you speak of, & I am curious to know something about them.

With our best love to all

Always yours most affectionately

AUBREY BEARDSLEY.

CLXXVI.

(1898.)

Hôtel Cosmopolitain,
Menton, Feby. 2nd.

I have had a slight return of Rhumatism, & a touch of congestion, so have had to keep my bed for a few days & am alas still there.

How glad I was to get your letters, & that precious little book on S. Thomas. It was very charming of you to think of the stamps; Father Cavanagh has them by this. The girdle I look forward to exceedingly. .

I got such a kind letter last night from dear Father B. ~~He is sorry to say~~ he has been unwell. He is convalescent now. He gave me such an interesting account of Wardour Castle where he is now staying.

Please forgive such a scanty letter but I feel rather incapable after the fatigues of enforced rest, & a diet from which solid foods have almost entirely been excluded.

Yours always very affectionately

AUBREY BEARDSLEY.

CLXXVII.

(1898.)

Hôtel Cosmopolitan,
Menton, Feby. 9th.

MY DEAREST BROTHER

I am still bedridden. We have had a sad spell of mistral which has kept my poor chest in a menacing state. Everyone has been so kind & sympathetic. Father Orchmans & the Abbé Luzzani come often to see me, & cheer me much, & help me to chase away Maître Pathelin's Papillons noirs.

*Thank you very much for your letter, I am so grieved

that you have not been very well. I too have known something of weariness this last week or two.

For a traveller, weariness is the good Angel that keeps him in mind of the end of his journey.

Both Mother & myself have relished the little book on S. Thomas very greatly. She says she wishes she had a copy herself, & I wonder if you have still one you could send her. She would be so grateful.

Good bye my dearest Brother.

I am always most affectionately

AUBREY BEARDSLEY.

CLXXVIII.

(1898.)

•
Hôtel Cosmopolitain,
Menton, Feby. 16th.

MY DEAREST BROTHER

I have been able to get up for a short time to day, but look very disconsolate with a beard & in an extremely composite costume. It was so sweet of you to send me the little book of Faber's, I liked it so much. Mother asks me to thank you for the maxims of S. Thomas. F. Cavanagh sent me a blessed card. Yes it is beautifully designed.

There has been a great deal of illness here the last few weeks. The Egyptologist has kept me company.

Ever very affectionately

AUBREY BEARDSLEY

CLXXIX.

(1898.)

Hôtel Cosmopolitain,
Menton, Feb. 21st.

MY DEAREST BROTHER

I hope you are much less worried now, or rather not worried at all.

I am glad to say I have not been sent to bed again. My first few days of convalescence were blessed with the most perfect weather & I made good progress.

To day alas there is a downpour & I am miserably depressed. There is hardly any trace left of the congestion, but the rheumatism as might be expected is most obstinate, when I get stronger Dr. C. will order me massage.

My copy of *La Cathédrale* has not arrived yet. I read a short extract from it in some paper which made me curious to get the book, but I don't expect to like it as I never like Huysmans.

Do you know a picture of Benozzo Gozzoli (at the Louvre) called *Le Triomphe de S. Thomas d'Aquin*? I saw a photograph of it the other day. It is quite the most brilliant & attractive thing.

I was indeed delighted with Fr. —'s text for his sermon on the conversion of England. I am by the way just having a book of his sent me.

Fathers Orchmans & Luzzani are deeply interested in the doings at S. Ethelburga's full accounts of which have appeared in *La Croix*.

The country house of the dear Oratorians must I am sure be a delightful retreat. I wish you would remember me very affectly to F.S.B. when you see him next.

I should like to have written you a much nicer letter but I cannot overcome my downcast feelings. It has all been such a terrible disappointment for me.

With the greatest affection

AUBREY BEARDSLEY.

Mother poor dear lady has been such a martyr to toothache these last few days.

CLXXX.

(1898.)

Hotel Cosmopolitan,
Menton, Feb. 27th.

MY DEAREST BROTHER

Thank you very much for your letter, & the little book for the month of S. Joseph which I will read with you day by day through March. I am not able to get out yet so I have a lot of time for reading.

I am in better spirits, indeed very happy at times, for I have really great cause to be thankful for this latest trouble. I have been reading a good deal of S. Alphonsus Liguori; no one dispells depression more effectually than he. Reading his loving exclamations so, lovingly reiterated it is impossible to remain dull & sullen. I believe it is often mere physical exhaustion more than

hardness of heart that leaves me so apathetic & uninterested.

I am dear * * *

Your very affectionate

AUBREY BEARDSLEY.

Aubrey Beardsley died 16th March, 1898, in his 26th year.

At nine there was a Mass at the Cathedral, one of the clergy there officiated and F. Orchmans was there, and then took over the burial service. My head is so stupid I cannot write clearly, but I want you to know how beautiful everything was, the dear heart himself would have loved it. There was music. The road from the Cathedral to the Cemetery was so wonderfully beautiful, winding up a hill; it seemed like the way of the Cross; it was long and steep and we walked. His grave is on the edge of the hill; it is hewn out of the rock, and is a true sepulchre, with an arched opening and a stone closing it. We thought of the sepulchre of

